14
1-79

STRICTURES

ON THE

TRUE CAUSE

OF

THE PRESENT ALARMING SCARCITY,

&c. &c. 2/

[*Entered at Stationers' Hall.*]

14
1-79

STRICTURES

ON THE

True Cause

OF THE PRESENT ALARMING

SCARCITY OF GRAIN

AND

OTHER PROVISIONS;

AND

A PLAN FOR PERMANENT RELIEF:

HUMBLY SUBMITTED TO

Public Consideration,

BY

ALEXANDER ANNESLEY.

K

WITH AN

Hiſtorical Deduction

OF THE

PRICES OF PROVISIONS.

INTERSPERSED WITH

VARIOUS MATTERS

CONNECTED WITH THE

Commerce and Navigation of Great Britain.

TOGETHER WITH

A CHRONOLOGICAL ACCOUNT

OF THE SEVERAL

Statutes, Proclamations, and Parliamentary Regulations,

For controuling the Markets,

AND

PREVENTING MONOPOLY, ENGROSSING, &c. &c.

From the Norman Conquest to the present Æra.

——— Quid non mortalia pectora cogis,
Auri ſacra fames?——— VIRGIL.

DEDICATED TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE WILLIAM PITT,
CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

LONDON:

Printed by S. HAMILTON, Falcon-Court, Fleet-Street,

FOR MESSRS. MURRAY & HIGHLEY, FLEET-STREET.

1800.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE WILLIAM PITT,

CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER,

&c. &c. &c.

SIR,

IN dedicating this little Work to you, I rather ſeek to honour my own name than exalt yours, which can receive no additional luſtre from *my* feeble attempts at panegyric; yet a conſciouſneſs of my own inſignificance cannot ſtifle the admiration your ſplendid talents have inſpired; nor can I ſuppreſs the impulſe I feel to pay that tribute of applauſe to one ſo juſtly entitled to every commendation.

YOU, like every other great miniſter, from a Mecænas to a Cardinal Ximenes, and from the latter to your illuſtrious Father, have found enemies as well as adulators. *Adulation* I ſhall doubtleſs be charged with by many an iraſcible politician; but conſcious ſincerity fortifies me againſt their cavils. It is your conduct as a miniſter that I make the theme of eulogy.

The conduct of public men is certainly open to diſcuſſion. Cenſure, when they merit it, is generally dealt out to them with a liberal hand; but when their conduct claims our higheſt admiration, an invidious principle, unhappily too prevalent, robs them of half their well-earned praiſe.

In all ages mankind have diſcovered an unaccountable propenſity to extol the paſt and depreciate the preſent: this foible prevails more in our own country than in any other; but impartial and diſpaſſionate perſons will judge of men and meaſures on more rational grounds than vulgar prejudices or the ephemeral fluctuations of popularity,—neither furniſhing a fair criterion of the true character of a miniſter.

To form a correct judgment of the abilities of a miniſter, we muſt advert to the effects of his adminiſtration. *You* were enveloped with difficulties unparalleled in the hiſtory of men; *you* had not, like your predeceſſors, an inexhauſtible repertory to reſort to for governing *your* conduct in *office*. New and perilous as *your* ſituation became, ſurrounded by foreign and domeſtic traitors, in momentary expectation of a moſt

dreadful exploſion, you nobly retained the helm, ſteered the agitated bark of ſtate through political oceans unknown and unexplored,—when the lowering heavens apparently threatened its inſtant and irrevocable annihilation—when deſpair had marked every countenance, and the deſtructive torrent ruſhed in at every chink,—in that portentous moment, when the frightful abyſs ſeemed opening to ſwallow all, you, with tranſcendent fortitude, piloted the buffeted ſtate-bark!

"So when an angel, by divine command,
"With riſing tempeſts ſhakes a guilty land,
"Such as, of late, o'er pale Britannia paſs'd,
"Calm and ſerene he drives the furious blaſt;
"And, pleas'd th' Almighty's orders to perform,
"Rides in the whirlwind and directs the ſtorm."

The increaſing commerce of the kingdom,—the glorious attitude ſhe has aſſumed on the face of the globe, after every inſidious attempt to proſtrate her greatneſs and ſully her naval glories,—ſurely demand our applauſe, and claim our higheſt admiration. But, alas! all ſublunary joys are fleeting: we no ſooner become eaſed from one dreadful apprehenſion, than another ſucceeds:—*famine*, in the midſt of *plenty!* ſcarcity, at a

time of *unequalled exuberance!* and *factitious dearth*, in ſpite of *ſuperior fecundity!* now threaten us with all their concomitant horrors! —To *you*, Sir, the country look up for relief; from *you* they claim it,—and from you, I truſt, they will receive it. The name of PITT muſt then live in hiſtoric page as the *beſt*, as well as *greateſt*, miniſter of his time—and be by all admired with an enthuſiaſm equal to that of

SIR,

Your moſt reſpectful, moſt devoted,

And humble ſervant,

THE AUTHOR.

STRICTURES

ON THE

TRUE CAUSE

OF

THE PRESENT ALARMING SCARCITY,

&c. &c.

Homo sum, humani nihil à me alienum puto.

TERENCE.

THE enormous price of proviſions being a ſubject of the higheſt importance, and coming home to the feelings of every individual member of ſociety, whether he moves in the higher, the middle, or the humbler ſpheres of life, it becomes well worth the attention of thoſe who poſſeſs means and opportunity to inveſtigate the cauſe of ſuch an evil, and enter upon an impartial diſcuſſion of the erroneous ſyſtem to which the preſent dearth is aſcribable, and, in the courſe of ſuch an inveſtigation, to ſuggeſt ſuch plans as may ultimately tend to prevent ſimilar diſtreſſes.

I cannot but lament my inability to do juſtice to ſo intricate and complex a ſubject, aware as I am of the deep reſearches and laborious exertions of ſome of the ableſt writers in the moſt civiliſed as well as enlightened parts of Europe on this momentous topic. I tremble, therefore, at my preſumption in entering the liſts; but when I reflect, that, if ſucceſs crowns my humble efforts, mil-

lions of my fellow-creatures may be benefited—and, if I fail, the abortive attempts of an obſcure individual can do no miſchief to the cauſe I have undertaken to advocate—I am emboldened to hazard a few obſervations thereon.

Unconnected with, and conſequently unbiaſſed by, party predilections, my ſentiments are the genuine effuſions of a mind reſponſive to the cries of ſurrounding thouſands, ſinking under preſſures as inſupportable as they have hitherto been found irremediable. Impreſſed with the moſt anxious ſolicitude to adminiſter to their relief, I am urged to commit my ideas on this diſtreſſing ſubject to public inſpection, from a hope that ſome abler pen may, by adopting my hints, frame a ſyſtem capable of diffuſing general benefit, and affording permanent relief.

Much has been imputed to the expenſive war we are at preſent engaged in, and to which our calamitous dearths have by many been aſcribed; but on a candid and impartial inveſtigation it will be found that the war has rather been the *pretext* for, than the *cauſe* of, the preſent high price of every article of ſubſiſtence. We muſt not form our judgment of the political and fiſcal circumſtances of nations by the rules of appreciating the occurrences of private life. It may with mathematical preciſion be demonſtrated, that our increaſed expenſes have been the natural reſult of additional reſources pouring in upon us from every quarter; nay I will undertake to prove, that a large proportion of the ſubſidies paid to our allies, as well as of the immenſe contributions our inveterate foes have levied on them, have found their way to our coffers!—Britain ſtands a political phænomenon on the face of the globe! and Poſterity will, in her hiſtory, contemplate with admiration the noble ſtruggle ſhe has made under circumſtances of depreſſion that muſt have appalled

the ſtrongeſt minds! Poſterity will know how to appreciate the merits of thoſe who, in the day of nerveleſs deſpondence, and paralyſed horror, placed themſelves in the breach, with a fortitude unparalleled, and a magnanimity unrivalled, in the annals of nations! Poſterity will exult in the noble and impoſing attitude ſhe aſſumed when the reſt of Europe were crouching at the feet of the monſtrous *chimæra*, and when the greateſt potentates that attempted to tame her were panic-ſtruck by a *bare look* from her *Corſican keeper!*

It has, however, been obſerved, by authority to which I bow with all due deference, "That a protracted war, "at an expenſe of ſixty-four millions per annum, muſt "eventually be ruin." This aſſertion could not be controverted were we in other circumſtances; but, in our preſent ſituation, the *appearance* is more alarming than the *reality*. The immenſe increaſe of commerce from the year 1792 to the preſent period exceeds all previous calculation; the total of Britiſh manufactures and foreign merchandiſe exported, and of goods imported, in the year 1799, amounting to the enormous ſum of 123,706,955*l.* 12*s.* 7*d.* If to this is added the annual landed product, conſiderably more than 90,000,000*l.* (although, by various modifications, and in many inſtances by unfair evaſions, it appears, by the produce of the income-tax, to be no more than 55,000,000*l.*) and if we likewiſe add the funded intereſt (excluſive of what is paid to foreigners), making 15,000,000*l.* beſides other innumerable leſſer reſources, not neceſſary to particulariſe in this paper—the annual *circulation* of *convertible* property cannot be taken at leſs than 230,000,000*l.* ſterling; *ſeven-tenths* of which re-produces capital, and again becomes applicable to the various uſes of tillage, manufactures, commerce, navigation, building, repairs, and

general improvements; while the remaining *three-tenths* are ſunk and abſorbed in ſubſiſtence, and under the general head of unproductive expenditure. Thus a vaſt circulating balance is annually left in the ſtate for the performance of all its neceſſary functions, without trenching on its capital. If the facts bear me out in my political arithmetic, (and which I truſt they will, on the minuteſt inveſtigation, be found to do,) I would aſk whence come theſe reſources? I boldly aver, the preſent war has created a great part of thoſe *reſources!* The ſubverſion of the trade of Holland, the capture of her colonies, the almoſt total annihilation of French manufactures, the ſhutting up the ports of Spain and interruption of her American and Indian commerce, the humiliation of Venice and Genoa, has contributed to throw the commerce of the globe into the arms of *Britain!* to ſay nothing of America, which would, in all probability, have had the ſame intercourſe with us had we been bleſſed with an earlier peace.

But I would by no means have it inferred that, in adducing theſe obſervations, I am an advocate for a *bellum interneccionum:* I lament as much as any man exiſting the dire neceſſity we are under of carrying on ſo dreadful a warfare, in ſpite of the obvious advantages reſulting to this nation from its continuance; but I will maintain what has been generouſly conceded to me, namely, that "*Peace in ſome reſpects may be dangerous.*" That is preciſely the doctrine I wiſh to inculcate. God forbid that I ſhould urge the protraction of the war, could a ſafe and permanent peace be obtained! But experiments in politics are always hazardous, and become doubly ſo when we are compelled to try the efficacy of pacific meaſures with a *treacherous* enemy in the *zenith* of his power; who, in peace or war, would ſtill ſeek our deſtruction. From

ſuch invidious neighbours we muſt look for additional ſecurities to give permanence to compacts of *amity*, or we ſhould only refrain from hoſtilities to give our rivals new breath to re-engage in the arduous conteſt.

An expenditure of *ſixty-four millions* is, beyond doubt, an alarming circumſtance; but national expenditure muſt always be branched under two heads, that is, the productive and the unproductive. By *productive* expenſes I mean thoſe diſburſements which circulate in our own country or its dependencies, and create, or rather renew, capital, which thereby becomes a mere change of property from its former poſſeſſor to a ſucceeding one, without inducing any very conſiderable diminution of the national ſtock in its operations. By unproductive expenſes I mean ſuch as are ſunk or abſorbed by conſumption, or, on being exported, tend to form new capital to a foreign nation, and unlikely to find its way back in the courſe of commercial circulation. Such expenditure is certainly an inevitable loſs to the community: but ſo long as our real profits, of whatever nature they may be, exceed this latter head of expenditure, ſo long ſhall we continue an affluent, a free, and an independent, nation.

If the various and immenſe ſums expended in the war were totally ſunk, or wholly abſorbed by abſolute conſumption or final expatriation, ſo as never to find its way back or re-circulate in a new form or ſhape, then, I admit, our ruin would be as ſpeedy as inevitable: but national expenditure bears no analogy to private expenſe; the one merely flows to the extremities, but finds its way back to the heart of the empire with aſtoniſhing velocity, reſuſcitating the body politic, invigorating the entire frame, and imparting new energies to the ſtate; while private or individual expenſe ends where it began, and, like a torrent precipitated from ſtupendous rocks, can

never make its way back to the ſource whence it was daſhed. Thus the one is a mere transfer of convertible property from one deſcription of ſubjects, to the contemporary, and generally the leſs opulent, members of the ſame ſtate, who, by productive labour, are enabled to obtain a part of property which might otherwiſe have only remained in the coffers of the rich; while the other is a total and irrecoverable loſs, that can in no ſhape revert to its original proprietor.

It was to this ſecret, but certain, operation of fiſcal circulation, that Holland became enabled, for more than *eighty years*, to contend with the then potent monarchy of Spain in one of the moſt extenſive wars that Europe ever witneſſed; and that, too, under the diſadvantage of fighting her battles with mercenary troops, againſt the fineſt armies and the ableſt generals of that or any other age: but by her fleets wintering in her own harbours, and making her ports their home, and expending there the riches they acquired by their captures, added to their immenſe and unrivalled commerce, they not only ſupported their prodigious expenſes with eaſe, but the ſtate became enriched to a degree exceeding all practical calculation!

In like manner did the leſs brilliant republic of Genoa, about three centuries ſince, carry on a moſt burthenſome war with Venice, then her moſt formidable and implacable rival, at an expenſe ſo enormous that ſhe muſt inevitably have ſunk under its preſſure, had not her immenſe debts been contracted with her own ſubjects, who, by their prodigious commerce, were enabled to ſupport the ſtate by *their loans*; and, in conſequence of erecting the celebrated bank of St. George, they effected the apparent difficult operation of converting thoſe very debts into freſh reſources for the government, by a conſtant creation and interior circulation of *new capital*, making its

way progreſſively into the coffers of the *ſtate*; and, by that gradual and regular re-action of circulating media, enabling her to perform all her political functions and financial operations with reciprocal facility. *Thus the problem of a ſtate becoming richer from its interior expenditure may be fairly ſolved.* National riches and national happineſs, however, are not always concomitant bleſſings: ancient as well as modern hiſtory demonſtrate the fallacy of a contrary doctrine: but national *affluence* is moſt certainly eſſential to national *power*, and as indiſpenſably neceſſary to the independent exiſtence of the body politic as the vital blood in the human body is for the regular operation of the animal functions. Without affluence a ſtate becomes feeble, totters to its centre, and is at length wholly ſwallowed by ſome rapacious neighbour. Without vital blood to animate the human frame———But it were an inſult to the underſtanding of my reader were it neceſſary to remind him of the inevitable fatality that muſt enſue.

Having premiſed theſe obſervations, as eſſential to the introduction of the plans I am about to propoſe for general relief, it becomes neceſſary to animadvert on the erroneous ſyſtem which, in my humble opinion, has been productive of the evils we complain of, and hazard a few general remarks on the various cauſes that have had ſo pernicious a tendency, before I explain my ſyſtem; and then ſtate the fluctuations in the price of grain, eſpecially wheat, and other articles of ſuſtenance, from the Norman conqueſt to the preſent times; and likewiſe the various meaſures that have, during ſo long a period, been adopted by our anceſtors, as well as thoſe reſorted to in our days, during the ſeveral dearths that have prevailed in this country from that epocha.

It is not to any phyſical alteration of our ſoil that we

are to attribute the recent and preſent ſcarcity, but to the material change which has taken place in the minds and manners of its inhabitants. The rage for accumulating wealth, which pervades all ranks in ſociety, has abſorbed the ſocial virtues: to the generous ardour, the uniform induſtry, and the noble diſintereſtedneſs, which animated the hoſpitable boſoms of our anceſtors, has ſucceeded an almoſt univerſal principle of rapacity; and a thirſt for factitious refinement has been ſubſtituted for ſimplicity of manners, and the blunt but manly integrity of a once-valued and reſpected yeomanry!

If the amazing decreaſe of every ſpecies of produce is not owing to any phyſical alteration in our ſoil, to what cauſe is ſo ſupernatural a change in the ſpace of forty years to be aſcribed? Or is our population ſo wonderfully increaſed in that ſhort period, that, inſtead of *ex*porting grain to the amount of *eight millions* annually, (which was actually the caſe in the years 1744, 1745, 1746, 1747, and 1748, as appears by the bounties then paid, the entries outward, and a table laid before Parliament, that the average medium of exports for thoſe five years amounted to 8,007,948*l.* ſterling, at the price of from 35*s.* to 50*s.* per quarter,) we ſhould now be driven to *im*port grain to the amount of upwards of ten millions, making a balance againſt the nation, in thoſe articles, of upwards of eighteen millions ſterling! There is ſomething ſo very myſterious in the wonderful change, that it involuntarily leads me to follow up the remark by a ſtring of queries, rather than a feeble attempt to develope the cauſe! I would then inquire of the *agriculturiſt* how it has happened that ſuperior improvements in aration and tillage have cauſed ſterility inſtead of increaſed fecundity in our ſoil? I would fain learn why *ours* is the only country in the *univerſe* where *exuberant* and *plentiful* harveſts produce

ſcarcity, and even *famine?* By what inexplicable phænomenon has the *increaſing value* of land, and unrivalled *opulence* of the *farmer*, reſulted from *defective crops*, *heavy loſſes*, and *ruinous ſeaſons?* I would gladly know by what curious and latent proceſs of nature *ſucceſsful tillage* in *England* operates in an *inverſe ratio?* Or has that venerable old lady *Britannia*, after preſiding ſo long over our iſle with unſullied reputation, afflicted her ſons with a more than Babylonian confuſion of language, that, by the ſtrangeſt perverſion, they ſubſtitute the term *dearth* for the more appropriate one of *plenty?* Will it not be prudent in our ſenate to conſult the myſtic oracles of *Mark-lane* and *Bear-key*, more ænigmatical in their reſponſes than the ancient oracles of Pythian Apollo or the Cumæan Sybils? How it has happened, that *ſome* of the muſhroom-gentry, who pay their devotions to the altar of Mammon, and even offer *human ſacrifice* to propitiate the *God*, have, from their *vaſt loſſes*, and the *oppreſſions* heaped on their *trade*, come to vie with the ancient nobility of the kingdom in the ſplendour of their *villas* and glare of their *equipages?* Let me prevail on them to furniſh the people with a clue to extricate them from the labyrinth, leſt they ſhould be devoured by that dreadful minotaur, *public indignation!* But, above all, let us inquire how thoſe pagan worſhippers of *Ceres*, under which deſcrlption I claſs *ſome* of the *millers* and *mealmen*, who, although denied initiation in her *Eleuſynian* myſteries, have been certainly *fully* inſtructed in *thoſe* of her *ſon-in-law!*—let us aſk theſe perſonages by what *new alchymy* their *aſſerted diſtreſs* has been tranſmuted into *proſperity*, their *ruin* into *affluence?* Nor ſhould we omit interrogating that benevolent order of beings, the *minor* bakers, (I mean not that they are *minus* in *conſequence*, but ſimply in *weights*,) how they have contrived to *make fortunes* by their *loſſes*, and

become *affluent* from a *depreciated trade?* as many of this *perſecuted* race have actually ſworn they were *undone*, and their fortunes wholly *ſunk*, by continuing ſo *ruinous a buſineſs!*—But I entreat the reader's pardon for detaining him ſo long from the main object I have in view, *viz.* the pointing out the plan of relief: yet I apprehended that a ſynopſis of this *tragic drama*, with ſome account of the *dramatis perſonæ*, would tend to unravel the plot, and accelerate the *dénouement*, if our *acting managers* would ſomewhat more narrowly pry into what is doing behind the ſcenes.—To proceed, then:—

When we reflect on the obvious advantages we poſſeſs—the natural fertility of our iſland—the unbounded freedom of its inhabitants—the ſecurity of property—the excellence and impartiality of our laws—the liberal and conſtant encouragement ſo uniformly held out for improvement in ſuperior cultivation—the immenſe number of cattle bred for all the purpoſes of aration and tillage—the numerous canals for facilitating the regular tranſfuſion of its produce—the various and ingenious mechanical implements for agricultural convenience—the incomparable roads for the ſafe and ſpeedy communication of every part of the cultivated ſoil with the market-towns—the prodigious number of coaſting-veſſels for carrying the product of the maritime parts of the iſland to the great corn-marts of the kingdom——When we (I muſt again repeat) reflect on theſe ſtriking advantages, we are naturally led to conclude, that the alarming dearth ſo generally complained of muſt owe its origin to the wrong meaſures that have hitherto been purſued, which have been greatly aggravated by the defective regulations that have been adopted to remedy the evil.

It then follows, of courſe, that new ſyſtems muſt be reſorted to for remedying evils which old maxims have

been found inadequate to remove, or even ameliorate. A great deal has been ſaid and written on the ſubject of foreſtalling, engroſſing, and regrating, and particularly on monopolies, as well as the dangerous combination of a few great capitaliſts withholding a regular ſupply of grain for the moſt nefarious purpoſes. To ſome, or all, of theſe cauſes, the *factitious* ſcarcity we have ſo long experienced has been aſcribed. This may in *part* be true, but cannot to the *extent* of the evil complained of. The calamity is too general: were it partial, many of the wretches who prey on their fellow-creatures, and aggravate their diſtreſs, would be much *oftener* detected.

I do not mean to calumniate any man, or accuſe any individuals, of enormities which would call forth the execrations of ſociety, if the perpetration of ſuch nefarious proceedings could be legally proved againſt them: the exiſting laws of the country, ſo ably and virtuouſly adminiſtered by the noble perſons who preſide in our tribunals, are fully competent to puniſh ſuch high miſdemeanors; but it unfortunately happens that there are too many implicated in the crimes I have enumerated to give a reaſonable hope of detecting thoſe deteſtable vultures who devour the *famiſhed* carcaſes of their fellow-creatures.

Unfortunately for the community, there are ſo many participating in the profits reſulting from engroſſing, regrating, foreſtalling, and monopoly, that convictions, in ſuch caſes, are extremely rare in our courts, and have in but too many inſtances been found almoſt impracticable. Can it be ſuppoſed that the farmer, who receives an advanced price for his produce, will quarrel with the monopoliſer who gives ſuch advanced price? Is it reaſonable to ſuppoſe that the wretched tools of the latter will *impeach*, much leſs *proſecute*, their employers? And how is

it poſſible to convict the culprits, when ſo many are benefited by their delinquency?

But, however obvious theſe abuſes may be, yet it muſt be obſerved that great care muſt be taken in eſtabliſhing controuling regulations, in order that the ſpirit of enterpriſe may receive no check, or the natural ſtimulus to induſtry be diverted or interrupted; on the contrary, additional encouragement muſt be held out to promote huſbandry rather than arreſt the arm of induſtry by multiplying penal ſtatutes, againſt the due enforcement of which ſo many obſtacles are thrown in the way: the great difficulty, therefore, is how to draw the line between *legal profit* and *public plunder*. My aim is to afford the former a wide field to range in, and to render the latter impracticable by removing the temptation.

A wide diſtinction certainly exiſts in laying reſtraints on articles of *prime neceſſity*, or on commodities peculiarly denominated *mercantile articles*. The one is eſſential to our exiſtence, the other rather miniſtering to our luxury than ſatisfying our natural wants; yet to meddle with either, in a free commercial ſtate, is, I confeſs, very dangerous. It cannot be denied, however, that the *axiom* ſo generally adopted of every ſpecies of trade, whether in articles of the firſt neceſſity or thoſe of luxury, *finding their own level*, has been practically proved *fallacious*, and leſs ſolid than we could poſſibly conceive, from the ſplendid talents of thoſe who laid it down as an incontrovertible *poſtulatum*. However impolitic or anti-commercial it may be to lay reſtraints on manufactures and trading commodities, it will never be denied that the articles eſſential to the exiſtence of every individual in the ſtate ought not, nay cannot, come within the general rule of *finding its own level*. The practice of our anceſtors in-

validate the poſition, and our ſtatute-books bear indubitable teſtimony againſt the practicability of ſo erroneous a maxim.

In this age of *politeneſs*, or, we may with more truth write, in this age of licentiouſneſs, when no other ſcale of *merit* or *virtue* exiſts but the depth or breadth of the *purſe*, *empty praiſe* has little efficacy, and *applauſe* without *profit* operates but *coldly* on the human mind!

Probitas laudatur, et alget.

The only emulation now prevailing is, not who ſhall confer moſt benefit *on*, but who ſhall become the richeſt man *in* his country! Thoſe whoſe heads and hearts would otherwiſe reflect honour on the kingdom are unhappily tainted with ſordid avarice, not ſo much ariſing from a *depraved mind* as a bending to the mania of the times and a childiſh predilection for the poſſeſſion of ſplendid trifles.

The exiſting abuſes imperiouſly call on the ſtrong arm of government for *aid* and *redreſs*, and in an eſpecial degree for rendering the conveyance of articles of the firſt neceſſity to the hands of the conſumer leſs circuitous. The number of *middle-men* between the agriculturiſt and the conſumer ſhould be leſſened, all contracts and ſales of grain and cattle, as well as other articles of ſtock, ſhould be invalid, unleſs made *bonâ fide* in the open market *, and the corn inſpectors' law ſhould be fully enforced, in caſe of any violation of that ſtatute. Private intereſts muſt not be permitted to ſtand in competition with the

* We are well aſſured that there are a number of very opulent perſons who have entered into contracts for the purchaſe of corn and cattle for a certain number of years; and, conſequently, if a plentiful year enſues, the public can derive no benefit from ſuch a bleſſing, as the market is governed by theſe gentlemen, who find means moſt ſhamefully to evade the law!

public welfare, and apprehended evils ought never to impede the redreſs of thoſe already exiſting: but my plan does not extend to *compulſory ſales*, or fixing a *maximum* on the articles of ſubſiſtence. My object is to recommend a ſyſtem for procuring *voluntary*, regular, and ſpeedy ſupplies, and to point out plans which may ultimately prevent the ſending ſuch immenſe ſums out of the kingdom for the purchaſe of *foreign grain*.

The inefficacy of laws to compel farmers to bring their grain to market, without making it their intereſt to do ſo, has been fully demonſtrated; to reſort to ſimilar meaſures, therefore, would be as injudicious as impracticable. But the evil does not entirely ariſe from the farmer withholding ſupplies. The miſchief is only half removed when he has fairly and properly brought his grain for ſale; a great number of rapacious agents are permitted to ſtep in between the farmer and the conſumer, all of whom ſtruggle for a profit, whereby the price is ſo conſiderably enhanced as to place bread almoſt entirely without the reach of the poor! Theſe leeches ſhould be ſhook off. The ſtate engine will work with more freedom when its machinery becomes leſs complex.

The progreſs of ſociety has placed individuals in *new ſituations*; and when ſuch new ſituations ſtimulate the corrupt part of the community to take advantages which are found to militate againſt the public weal, it imperiouſly demands legiſlative regulation and controul, eſpecially when ſuch regulations may be adopted as are not repugnant to long-eſtabliſhed *poſtulata*, and when a controul may be aſſumed perfectly conſiſtent with conſtitutional freedom. Agriculturiſts, however, muſt not be coerced, nor ſhould their operations be checked by additional penal diſcouragements; *remuneration* for *increaſing*, rather than *puniſhment* for withholding *ſupplies*, ſhould

be held out to that deſcription of men; but *that claſs of perſons*, who act as mere *drones*, and devour the *ſtores* eſſential for ſubſiſting the induſtrious part of the community, ſhould be wholly caſt out of the *national hive*.

Experience has fully evinced that our ſyſtem of corn laws, or rather regulations, have been erroneous—a different ſyſtem is indiſpenſable; but temporary expedients cannot effectually prevent flagrant abuſes, or controul avarice. In malignant diſeaſes, powerful remedies alone can effect radical cures: corrupt minds are wholly influenced by ſordid conſiderations; and, in human inſtitutions, ſome attention muſt be paid to the *maxims* as well as *morals* of the people. If avarice cannot be controuled, it ſhould, at leaſt, be turned into a channel where it may glide along *with* and be purified *by* the ſtream of *public utility*. The benevolent, the diſintereſted, and the truly virtuous man, ſtands not in need of penal reſtrictions; his internal rectitude points out the duty he owes ſociety. But, alas! when we reflect that the virtuous part of mankind conſiſt of a ſmall minority, and that the private intereſts, intemperate paſſions, and ſelfiſh principles of individuals of almoſt every rank, diſpoſe them to take advantage of other men's wants, and turn their capitals to the beſt account, it ſurely becomes an object well worthy legiſlative ſpeculation (if I may be permitted to uſe the phraſe), whether a ſyſtem of *prevention*, in our preſent predicament, would not be preferable to one of *puniſhment*.

Public tranquillity is the grand *deſideratum* of all *laws in a free ſtate*, and, when once eſtabliſhed, ſhould not be diſturbed by refined ſpeculations, repugnant, too often, to ſound policy and dear-bought experience. The ſecurity the laws afford every man to enjoy, in the moſt plenary and unqueſtioned manner, his own earnings, and the entire profit of his labour, muſt be held ſacred ſo long as

it ſhall be found conſiſtent with public welfare: thoſe employed in tillage ſhould, above all, more peculiarly become objects of public favour and protection; but thoſe, of whatever denomination they may be, who ſtand between that deſcription of men and the body of the people, making the former inſtruments for oppreſſing the latter, certainly merit *execration* more than *protection.* To theſe principles government ſhould direct their attention, and, by a retroſpective view of paſt evils, deviſe means for guarding againſt future miſchiefs.

And upon theſe principles alone can we look for a cure of the evils reſulting from engroſſing, foreſtalling, regrating, and monopolies. But in our endeavours to ſtrike off cankered branches, the utmoſt circumſpection ſhould be uſed, that the trunk receives no injury. The conſtitutional liberty of the ſubject muſt, in all caſes, be held ſacred; individual privileges, however, muſt not be permited to exiſt in violation of public utility: but, happily for the people, a conſtitutional redreſs is at hand, by a recurrence to the practice of our anceſtors in times of dearth, without endangering the liberty of the ſubject.

Monopolies in the body-politic may be compared to virulent ulcers in the human frame; but they muſt be eradicated by lenients rather than corroſives, the application of which may deſtroy the ſound parts; and thus, in attempting to relieve the ſubject from a great evil, we may pull a much greater on his head: but temporary remedies have ever been found inefficacious in preventing factitious ſcarcity—a permanent plan muſt be adopted, competent to defeat individual rapacity. The public purſe alone can accompliſh the utter extinction of private monopoly, and to this end the vigorous efforts of government ſhould be directed, rather than to the enacting of additional penal ſtatutes.

The experience of ages has fully demonſtrated the inexpedience of multiplying penal laws. If the legiſlators of antiquity had attended more to the prevention than puniſhment of crimes, their ſyſtems had been leſs defective. They ought rather to have encouraged the practice of virtue, by pecuniary rewards as well as honourable diſtinctions, to thoſe in particular who conferred benefits on their fellow-citizens, by the *benevolence* rather than the *ſplendor* of their actions. *Draco*'s ſanguinary ſyſtem engendered more crimes than the more lenient code of *Solon*. Multiplied puniſhments have ever been found leſs efficacious in the prevention of crimes and promotion of virtue than a well-timed diſtribution of rewards to thoſe who have deſerved well of their country. Men of great and exalted minds may find the higheſt gratification in the *applauſe* of their country, the erection of a ſtatue, or the proſpect of having their names tranſmitted with honour to proſperity: but, alas! how few of that deſcription are to be found among the multitude?

But it is not in detecting and puniſhing *little* criminals that *great crimes* are prevented. The beſt ſecurity a ſtate can have for the morals and virtue of its ſubjects is to connect their intereſt with the practice of the ſocial duties, and blend them ſo intimately together, that the one cannot be practiſed without promoting the other. Theſe are the fundamental principles of the Chineſe government. That wiſe and ancient ſtate is, perhaps, the only nation on earth who has engrafted a regular ſyſtem of remuneration in their conſtitution, which connects the proſperity of the individual with that of the ſtate ſo happily, that, by a ſingle motion of the grand machine, one and the ſame operation is performed on both. Surely the principle and the practice may be ſafely adopted by our country without innovating exiſting laws or eſtabliſhed

maxims. The policy of a great, enlightened, and moſt ancient ſtate* may be well worthy imitation; and it can be no degradation of ſound Britiſh ſenſe to incorporate ameliorating ſyſtems, emanating from Chineſe wiſdom, in our code; nothing on earth can equal the cultivation of that fine empire; and cultivation, without every poſſible encouragement, could never have been brought to ſuch perfection in that *unequal* country, without the higheſt poſſible remuneration following its operations.

A great deal has been ſaid and written on the utility of bounties on the exportation of corn, which were originally granted in order to prevent loss to the agriculturiſt in a plentiful year. This was certainly a wiſe expedient, and very properly reſorted to for the promotion of tillage. But it unfortunately has happened that this plan, like many other well-intended regulations, carried with it an evil unforeſeen by the original promoters—for no proviſion was made againſt ſeaſons of ſcarcity, inaſmuch as the ſuperflux corn ought rather to have been reſerved in public granaries, agreeably to the practice of other European nations, and even our own anceſtors.

By granting bounties on exportation, without either limiting the quantity, or reſerving in public granaries a ſufficient ſtore to check monopoly, and guard againſt ſcarcity, very ſerious miſchief has enſued; it has held out a bait for rapacity to catch at, and thrown temptations in the way of the capitaliſt that were irreſiſtible.—And when this deſcription of men once taſted with how much facility princely fortunes might be acquired, they ſoon became callous to other men's complaints; propelled alone by forded views, they ſhut their *eyes* as well as *ears* againſt all

* The Tartars, who conquered China, were ſo ſtruck with its wiſe laws and beneficent inſtitutions, that they made no innovations whatever in the government.

moral and *religious* precept, *entrenching* themſelves behind ſuch barriers as *legal artillery* could never reach.—Thus the price of wheat was gradually enhanced, and, what was originally intended as an encouragement and reward for ſuperior exertions in tillage, became in fact a very great and almoſt inſupportable burthen on the people—tending more to check the population of the country than any other cauſe.

Nor was this all—the corn-merchant, not the farmer, for whoſe ſole benefit the meaſure was intended, became enriched in years of plenty by his immenſe exports, without any very material advantages reſulting to the cultivator of the ſoil, whoſe additional profit, ariſing from the bounty, was only ſixpence per buſhel; and in years of ſcarcity, the merchants, by importing foreign grain, acquired immenſe profits at the expence of a famiſhed multitude, without a ſingle benefit reſulting to agriculturiſts!—Thus a body of men, whom the legiſlature rather *tolerated* than *encouraged*, ſtepped in between the *huſbandman* and the *conſumer*, reaping advantages, intended to confer *general*, not *partial* benefits: and thus avarice converted the plenty of one year to private emolument, inſtead of general relief, through an overſight in the legiſlature, who ought to have guarded againſt rapacity, by retaining a part of the ſurplus corn of a plentiful year, at a low inveſtment, to meet future exigencies. By neglecting ſuch a proviſion, the liberality of the legiſlature has only tended to promote the ſordid views of monopoliſts, who have unhappily ſeized the opportunity of aggrandiſing themſelves at the *expence* of the *public*.

It may be alleged, thus will it ever be in all human inſtitutions; the private vices of mankind, like pernicious inſects, gnawing the roots of the moſt flouriſhing plants, will ever deſtroy regulations, however excellent and well

intended. It is certainly a melancholy truth, that the wiſeſt laws are often proſtituted to the vileſt purpoſes. When experience therefore has proved the inefficacy of one meaſure, we muſt reſort to another; and the one moſt likely to produce beneficial effects ſeems to me, that inſtead of bounties on exportation, bounties on *production* ſhould rather be granted.

Bounties on production would only operate as a ſingle tax, while bounties on exportation certainly become (as an ingenious and excellent author* has truly obſerved) a double tax on the people at large: and this aſſertion is demonſtrable when we conſider that we pay 5*s.* per quarter for the allowed bounty, and again our proportion of the *enhanced price* of wheat in conſequence of the meaſure; and when the quantity exported in plentiful ſeaſons is adverted to, which, within the laſt twenty years, has amounted to twelve hundred thouſand quarters, the burthen upon the people, becomes enormous!

If the population of the country has increaſed in ſo great a degree, that its produce has actually been found inadequate to the people's ſubſiſtence, the remedy is happily at hand—more land muſt immediately be encloſed for cultivation. But if, on the minuteſt inveſtigation, the dearth ſhould be found to originate in private avarice, the coffers of government are alone competent to defeat the moſt formidable and extenſive combinations. Partial eſtabliſhments may meet with powerful competitors; and even companies, founded on truly patriotic principles, may have to contend with avaricious legions; but government alone can defeat monopoly, not by additional penal ſtatutes, which can never be enforced while ſuch numbers participate in the crime, *or rather the profits reſulting from it*,

* Dr. A. Smith, in his Inquiry into the Nature and Cauſes of the Wealth of Nations.

but by meeting the evil in a direct and manly manner.

And the only mode to effect ſo ſalutary a purpoſe is by a bounty on production. The people cannot heſitate between a voluntary grant and a compulſory tax. A bounty on production is a voluntary grant; a bounty on exportation, on the other hand, operates as a compulſory tax on the whole nation. The words of the great author (named in a preceding note) on this topic deſerve moſt ſerious attention—they are as follows:—"To encourage "the production of any commodity, a bounty upon pro- "duction, one would imagine, would have a more direct "operation than one on exportation. It would beſides "impoſe only one tax upon the people, that which they "muſt contribute in order to pay the bounty. Inſtead of "*raiſing* it would *lower* the price of the commodity in the "*home market*, and thereby, inſtead of impoſing a ſecond "tax upon the people, it might, at leaſt in part, *repay* them "for what they had *contributed* to the *firſt*. Bounties on "production, however, have been very rarely granted. "The prejudices eſtabliſhed by the commercial ſyſtem "have taught us to believe that national wealth ariſes "more immediately from *exportation* than from *production*. "It has been more favoured accordingly, as the more im- "mediate means of bringing money into the country. "Bounties upon production, it has been ſaid too, have "have been found, by experience, more liable to frauds "than thoſe upon exportation. How far this is true I "know not. *That bounties upon exportation* have been "abuſed to many *fraudulent purpoſes* is very well known. "But it is not the intereſt of merchants and manufacturers, "the great inventors of all theſe expedients, that the home "market ſhould be *overſtocked* with their goods, an event

" which a bounty upon *production might* ſometimes *occa-*
" *ſion.* A bounty upon exportation, by enabling them to
" ſend abroad the *ſurplus part*, and to *keep up the price* of
" what remains in the *home market*, effectually prevents
" this. Of all the expedients of the mercantile ſyſtem ac-
" cordingly, it is the one of which they are the *fondeſt*. I
" have known the different undertakers of ſome particular
" works agree privately among themſelves to give a
" bounty out of their own pockets upon the exportation of
" a certain proportion of the goods which they dealt in.
" This expedient ſucceeded ſo well, that it more than
" *doubled the price* of their goods in the *home market*, not-
" withſtanding a very conſiderable *increaſe in the produce.*
" The operation of a *bounty upon corn* muſt have been
" wonderfully different, if it has lowered the money-price
" of that commodity. Something like a bounty upon
" production, however, has been granted upon ſome par-
" ticular occaſions. The tonnage bounties given to the
" white-herring and whale fiſheries may, perhaps, be con-
" ſidered as ſomewhat of this nature; they tend directly,
" it may be ſuppoſed, to render the goods *cheaper in the*
" *home-market than they otherwiſe would be.*"

The legiſlature cannot balance between paying our own ſubjects a bounty of a few hundred thouſand pounds, or ſending as many millions out of the kingdom for foreign grain, eſpecially as the countries from whence ſuch immenſe quantities have been imported take few articles of Britiſh manufacture in return; America excepted, who nevertheleſs has not increaſed *her* orders for Britiſh commodities, in conſequence of our purchaſing her ſuperfluous wheat or flour.

The great authority * that at the cloſe of the laſt ſeſſion

* Lord Liverpool.

of parliament demonſtrated our recent importations to have been no leſs than 700,000 quarters of grain, for which we paid upwards of 5,600,000 *l.* ſterling, is unqueſtionable. This circumſtance muſt operate very powerfully on the mind of every thinking man. A repetition of ſuch dear-bought ſupplies muſt end in ruin!

Every ſtate, indebted for ſubſiſtence to other countries, gradually declined; their current ſpecie by degrees diſappeared, and their ſubverſion quickly followed. Innumerable examples, both ancient and modern, may be adduced from hiſtory to prove the verity of my poſition. To guard againſt ſuch future emiſſions of wealth for articles of conſumption is an object of the higheſt import to the ſtate. Thoſe who poſſeſs the power have, I am perſuaded, likewiſe the inclination to adopt every ſalutary precaution; and power and inclination can never be more beneficially exerciſed than in remedying flagrant abuſes. Every plan propoſed ſhould meet with a candid inveſtigation, be the projector ever ſo inſignificant. The greateſt diſcoveries in arts, and ſome of the moſt valuable improvements in the ſciences, owe their origin to humble and obſcure individuals, but were never deemed leſs valuable on that account.

I ſhall therefore, without further circumlocution, proceed to ſtate my plan for permanent relief, one part of which is to pay a bounty of five ſhillings per quarter upon the firſt two millions of quarters of new wheat that the farmers ſhall bring to, and, *bona fide*, diſpoſe of, in *open market*, in their reſpective vicinity. And no grain or other ſpecies of proviſions ſhould, on any account, be permitted to be ſold, or any contract whatever relating to grain or other ſpecies of proviſions be deemed valid, but ſuch as are made with the utmoſt publicity in the open

market *. And, to prevent monopoly, it would be adviſeable to ſubject all grain (if not other proviſions) *to the operation of the exciſe laws!* However unpopular ſuch a propoſition may be, yet, when we reflect on the immenſe advantages likely to emanate from the meaſure, I feel no difficulty in ſubmitting the propoſal to legiſlative conſideration; for, without regular returns of the ſtock in hand and the ſales, made in the uſual manner that other exciſed commodities are ſubjected to, abuſes will prevail, and ultimately counteract the beſt digeſted plans and moſt judicious ſyſtems. And if any grain ſhould be improperly hoarded by purchaſers for ſelfiſh purpoſes, and withheld from the conſumer for a given time, then ſuch purchaſer ſhould incur the penalties of engroſſing, &c.

It would be ſeen in a ſhort ſpace of time whether the dearth is real or factitious. And if it ſhould happen that wheat, by the adoption of this meaſure, (of which there

* A decree of Dubois, the prefect of the police in Paris, is well worth attention on this ſubject.

Foreſtalling and regrating having prevailed there to an alarming extent, it was decreed "That the dealers are enjoined or directed to carry their "cattle directly to the market-hall, and not to ſell them elſewhere on any "account, under the penalty of having the cattle confiſcated, and a fine "of 200 franks. Butchers, under the ſame penalty, are prohibited from "*buying* or *giving* earneſt for cattle to the dealers in any other place than "*openly* in the market. The dealers, on their arrival at the market, ſhall "*declare* and *regiſter* the number of heads of cattle they have to *ſell*, and "range them in ſtalls appropriated for the different kinds of cattle. Each "dealer ſhall mark his own cattle, and, on no account, ſuffer them to be "mixed with thoſe of any other. Each ſhall remain with his ſtock, and "not quit them before the ſale and delivery. The markets to open and "cloſe, by ſound of bell, on ſtated hours. Before the hour of ſale the in-"ſpector ſhall examine all cattle, to ſee whether they be fit for conſump-"tion. No cattle ſhall be ſold before the *opening*, or after the *cloſe*, of the "markets, under the penalty of confiſcation, and a fine of 50 marks on "each of the offenders. The cattle not diſpoſed of ſhall be kept in the "cells of the market-place, and expoſed to ſale the next day, three hours "before the opening of the market."

cannot remain a doubt) ſhould be reduced to 60*s.* per quarter, in that caſe I ſhould humbly ſubmit that government ſhould become purchaſers of at leaſt two million quarters of wheat, to be ſtored in public granaries or magazines, agreeably to the practice and cuſtom of many European ſtates, in order to meet future exigencies. By ſuch a ſtep no loſs would be likely to enſue to government ultimately; but if any did accrue, it would certainly bear no proportion to the miſchief of expatriating ſuch immenſe ſums, as we have been recently driven to, and which can in no way find their way back to this country.

The natural wants of agriculturiſts, and the conſtant demand on them for current caſh, added to the operation of the exciſe ſyſtem, will naturally compel them to ſend their remaining ſtock to market. But if government ſhould, in the outſet, be loſers, by purchaſing at a higher price than grain can be purchaſed for in ſucceeding years, the public would in fact receive an ample compenſation by ſuch ſubſequent reduction in the price of grain.

And, by way of elucidation, let us ſuppoſe that government ſhould be compelled to purchaſe corn at even a higher average price than ſixty ſhillings per quarter (excluſive of five ſhillings per quarter bounty),—for the firſt two million quarters of corn the aggregate would amount to ſix millions and a half, which, on a ſuperficial view, may appear enormouſly adding to our exiſting burthens; but when it is conſidered that the two million quarters of corn in the hands of government would, in times of dearth, amply reimburſe them, and, if a plentiful year ſucceeded, and it ſhould be deemed neceſſary to ſell the corn in their hands to prevent damage, it is impoſſible the loſs could be *equal* to the *extra expence* every individual in the ſtate incurs in the years of ſcarcity; and this is demonſtrable, when we calculate the immenſe difference in the

recent prices of wheat, namely, from *forty-eight* to *one hundred and ſixty-eight ſhillings* per quarter, making in the aggregate, according to the loweſt eſtimate, upwards of *fifty millions ſterling* additional expence to the public, excluſive of the immenſe drain of treaſure exported for *foreign* ſupplies. The original expenditure, or rather advance of two or three millions by government, would occaſion no ultimate loſs to the nation, as they would, in the operation, be benefited in a two-fold degree, namely, in the firſt inſtance, by the happy reduction of the price of wheat; and ſecondly, by the money entering in this kingdom, which would be again diffuſed among the people. In a political ſenſe, therefore, ſuch a meaſure could, in no point of view, be conſidered as a national loſs. The grand object is, how to obtain the required ſix millions and a half in a way leſs burthenſome to the people?—Of that I ſhall treat hereafter.

If the calculations of the ableſt authors who have written on this important topic, and the very intereſting reſearches of that noble and patriotic inſtitution, the Agricultural Society, are accurate, I am warranted in aſſerting that two million quarters of wheat is equal to eight weeks' conſumption or ſupply for England; eſtimating the conſumption of wheat in England, in one year, at about twelve million quarters, (for I would rather take it at an *under rate* in order to form ſome probable *data*) : but if the calculation ſhould be found erroneous, it cannot materially affect the ſyſtem I recommend, and it is indiſpenſably neceſſary to adopt a given quantity, to enable me to ground my obſervations on a certain *baſis*.

Let us take the population of England at ten millions, and ſuppoſe the average conſumption of each individual to be ſomewhat more than nine buſhels of wheat in a year; that will amount to, in making whole numbers, twelve

millions of quarters, or ninety-ſix millions of buſhels, and allowing to each individual near twelve pounds of bread for his weekly conſumption: the accelerated ſale of one-*ſixth* of the *entire quantity* therefore muſt, in its operation, *lower the markets immediately*; and the private wants of the farmer will naturally inſure *ſubſequent ſupplies* from his remaining ſtock in hand, ſo that a conſtant reduction of price will be the ultimate and inevitable reſult of the meaſure.

The expence of management of the public granaries or magazines of corn, muſt, for a time, be ſupported by government; but the neighbouring magiſtrates, agreeably to the practice of other European ſtates, ſhould have the *controul* of the buſineſs; that is to ſay, the whole arrangement ſhould be under the direction of five juſtices of the peace of the vicinity, three of whom to form a quorum, in order to give a legal ſanction to their meaſures. Theſe magiſtrates, aided by certain commiſſioners, to be nominated for that purpoſe from among the neighbouring independent freeholders, ſhould be empowered, aſſiſted by the corn-inſpectors, to make the *purchaſes*; and the *payment* for ſuch purchaſes, as well as the *bounty*, ſhould be made, by *orders for payment* counterſigned by the town-clerks or under-ſheriffs of counties, upon the reſpective receivers-general of the counties, which *orders* ſhould be made *payable to bearer*, in order that ſuch caſh orders might, for the convenience of farmers, be immediately negotiable; and the granaries ſhould be under the ſeals of three of the five juſtices, the corn-inſpectors, and four of the commiſſioners, who had duly qualified themſelves to act in ſuch caſes by an oath, &c. and the *officers of the exciſe*, together with ſome of the magiſtrates, commiſſioners, and corn-inſpectors, ſhould, at ſtated periods, viſit the public magazines or granaries of corn; and no ſale of ſuch

public grain ſhould take place without a *ſpecial order* of the *Privy Council*, addreſſed to the magiſtrates, &c. for ſuch purpoſe.

This mode of purchaſe and ſale would prevent abuſes, and is conformable to the practice eſtabliſhed in all ſuch ſtates of Europe where corn is ſtored in the public granaries, which are always open to conſumers, when the corn riſes to a given price, in order to give an effectual check to private extortion.

The *caſh orders* are certainly preferable to *debentures*, and would be found as convenient and current among the farmers as bank notes, and ſave conſiderable trouble to the ſeller *of* as well as thoſe entitled to the bounty *on* corn, and likewiſe be a ſaving to government; nor can it be doubted but theſe *caſh-orders* would float a long time in circulation as a very uſeful medium; which, at ſtated periods, might be exchanged by government for exchequer bills, on very eligible terms, and in a mode leaſt burthenſome to the public.

But if it ſhould be deemed more advantageous for government to raiſe the ſum of ſix millions and a half, in the manner of a contract or loan, upon the iſſue of ſix and a half millions in exchequer bills, then ſuch bills ſo iſſued ſhould be denominated the *Corn-Exchequer Bills*; and it is more than probable that ſuch a meaſure would be only neceſſary the *firſt year*, at leaſt to the *above extent*.

Objections may, however, be made to the ſyſtem of bounties or premiums on production, from an apprehenſion of forcing improper grain upon the markets by a new incentive to avarice; but, to obviate this difficulty, care muſt be taken by the acting magiſtrates, &c. (ſeveral of whom are moſt certainly competent judges of what is proper well-threſhed merchantable corn) that no orders for bounty iſſue, or any purchaſes be made, of improper or

unmerchantable grain; and they ſhould be even armed with a power to puniſh any perſon bringing ſuch for ſale to any of the markets; and other uſeful regulations may be adopted to prevent frauds.

But even the meaſure of a bounty or premium on the firſt two million quarters of corn that ſhall be ſold in the market, immediately after every harveſt, will be found inefficacious, unleſs an additional number of corn-mills are erected in all the market-towns. Such an additional number to be proportioned to their population; and theſe mills may be erected at the public expence, or by a voluntary ſubſcription of the inhabitants, who will benefit, in a very high degree, by the general conveniences reſulting from the erection of additional corn-mills in their own neighbourhood.

In all the fortified towns and cities on the continent, a number of wind-mills are erected on their walls or ramparts, which are either the property of the ſtate, and retained to grind the corn from the public granaries, or let on leaſe by the magiſtrates to private millers: the former grind the grain belonging to the government, the latter grind the corn belonging to individuals, but both are worked for facilitating the neceſſary ſupplies for general conſumption on the eaſieſt terms, viz. about two per cent. upon an average, which is generally paid by the *poor* in *kind*, and in *caſh* by the bakers. Theſe are the cuſtomary tolls paid to millers in Holland, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, and Ruſſia, and the taking a higher toll would ſubject the miller to ſevere penalties in thoſe reſpective countries.

In towns or cities where there are no walls or ramparts, or where they are not of ſufficient extent to allow the erection of wind-mills, water-mills are ſubſtituted, eſpecially in countries interſected by a number of ſtreams and

canals, which, in many parts of Germany, Denmark, and Sweden, and in nearly all the towns of Holland, run either through, or are contiguous to the towns and cities in thoſe ſtates; and ſtreams, canals, and often rivers, facilitate the inland conveyance of grain on the eaſieſt terms.

In our iſland we poſſeſs the advantage of erecting corn-mills, which may be worked by ſteam, on the moſt eligible terms; eſpecially in the coal counties, where fuel may be obtained at a cheap rate; and our numerous canals are admirably calculated not only to ſave expence in the article of carriage, but for the more ſpeedy conveyance of wheat and flour to the great corn-marts of the kingdom, imparting general advantages to tillage, infinitely ſuperior to what many other parts of Europe can boaſt.

If therefore a number of additional corn-mills, to be worked by wind, water, or ſteam, were erected in the principal market-towns, particularly in thoſe market-towns where the bounty would become payable, an immediate and efficient change would take place; for we cannot omit an obſervation (of which irrefragable proof has been adduced), namely, that the public have to contend with avarice from more than one quarter; and after Providence has bleſſed us with a moſt exuberant harveſt, and even long after the *farmer* has *diſpoſed* of his grain. If this ſhould be the caſe, and indubitable teſtimony has left not a doubt of the exiſtence of ſo ſerious an evil, we are driven to fix the delinquency on ſome or all of thoſe claſſes, who enhance the price of grain in its *tranſit* from the *farmer* to the *conſumer*.

When we reflect, therefore, how few there are who are proof againſt pecuniary temptations, it ſurely becomes a duty incumbent on our government to remove the poſſibility of extortion from the intermediate agents, who ſo greatly enhance the inceptive price of grain to the con-

ſumers, without conferring any real advantages on *ſeven-eighths* of the original proprietors of that neceſſary and indiſpenſable article of ſubſiſtence.

That *infrangible* claſs of men, the *millers*, poſſeſs an uncontroulable power over the markets under the preſent arrangement; and, where a power ſo unlimited exiſts, abuſes too often prevail, eſpecially when goaded by avarice to puſh for the goal, to which all ranks are ſo precipitately driving. That the public are injured by *ſome* of the members of this claſs is an incontrovertible truth. And what ſet of men poſſeſs ſuch advantages as the millers, if they are diſpoſed to avail themſelves of their peculiar power over the markets? To what cauſe can the difference in the prices of wheat and flour be aſcribed? Have the millers ever furniſhed the public with a fair criterion to lead their judgment on this inexplicable topic? If the operation is not grounded on manœuvre, let them aſſign the *true cauſe*. The public have long ſwallowed the noſtrum; let them aſſiſt in analyſing the ingredients of ſo deſtructive a compoſition!

We have indiſputable authority for aſſerting that flagrant abuſes exiſt in this quarter under the ſolemn ſanction of an oath; for we need only advert to the depoſition of a gentleman * every way competent to give a decided teſtimony on the ſubject, who, before the corn and flour committee nominated ſome few years ſince, depoſed, "that flour might be ſold at *eightpence* per ſack lower "than the average price of wheat (even allowing for the "expence of carriage)," and adding, "that if corn was "*ground on the ſpot*, the difference might be ſtill greater;" and it muſt be obſerved that this gentleman's teſtimony was the reſult of ſixteen years' experience, founded on very accurate data. And he further depoſed, "that dur-

* Mr. S. Wyatt.

" ing the ſevere froſt in the year 1789 the Albion Mills ac-
" tually ſupplied the public with flour at the rate of ſeven
" ſhillings and eightpence per ſack under the then average
" price of wheat."

Another gentleman of equal reſpectability and veracity, before the ſame committee, demonſtrated that a few opulent individuals have the entire guidance or controul of the markets, and make what returns they pleaſe to the meal-weighers; and this evidence was confirmed by the production of well-authenticated documents equally ſtrong and concluſive. From theſe premiſes, we may fairly conclude that the public are either prejudiced by the millers, or that there are not a ſufficient number of corn-mills neceſſary to anſwer the uniform and conſtant demand of an increaſing population.

Our deficiency in corn-mills muſt, therefore, excite the greateſt ſurpriſe, eſpecially as the advantages of erecting an additional number, in the vicinity of the canals, are ſo obvious; a meaſure that would tend greatly to enhance the value of canal ſhares, and, in a moſt eminent degree, promote the public welfare; as, in addition to the facilitating ſupplies, the moſt ſalutary conſequences would enſue from their being ſubjected to the viſits of the exciſe-officers, as the people, in conſequence of ſuch viſits, would be guarded againſt the danger of feeding on unwholeſome and pernicious mixtures, which are too often ground up with the corn to increaſe the profits of a rapacious miller.

I ſhall not, in this paper, treat on the prices of other ſpecies of proviſions, for the obvious reaſon that the regulations, which may be adopted for the more regular and reaſonable ſupplies of wheat and flour, may hereafter, with equal facility, be extended to procure every other article of ſubſiſtence on the moſt advantageous terms to the conſumer.

But it is certainly neceſſary to make ſome obſervations on the immenſe number of acres of excellent land now ſuffered to lie waſte in the very heart of a great and opulent kingdom. Why this apathy has ſo long prevailed, or rather why the obvious neceſſity of availing ourſelves of ſo capital a reſource, has not urged an earlier reſort to ſo certain an expedient for procuring additional ſupplies, excites the greateſt ſurpriſe? But I apprehend the true reaſon that can be aſſigned for ſo otherwiſe unpardonable a negligence is, that a general plan of encloſure might, like many other ſalutary projects, degenerate into a mere job, and, perhaps, only open a more extenſive field for depredation; as all combinations of private perſons, whether formed by a greater or a leſſer number, for good or for evil purpoſes, have pernicious tendencies, and ultimately operate (though under a different denomination) as monopoly, either directly or relatively; and as all combinations may be converted to miſchievous purpoſes, whenever ſight is loſt of the original motives which influenced their formation, they ought not only to be carefully avoided, but abſolutely diſcouraged.

In ſo momentous a concern as the bringing ſeven or eight millions of acres of waſte land into a ſtate of production, the interference of government is obvious; *private* emolument and *public* advantage are not always compatible; the *former* may be attendant *on*, but ſeldom *generates* the *latter*. A great ſtate ſhould not delegate to *private* operations *public meaſures*, which may be converted to individual aggrandiſement, when *general utility alone* ſhould be the oſtenſible and primary object.

The waſte lands in this kingdom would of themſelves form a ſplendid principality, if properly cultivated and brought to the productive ſtate they are capable of arriving at; nature, ſeconded by art, would in a few years

evince a fertility equal to the reſt of the iſland: nothing but labour and means are wanting to attain that deſirable end; and for its attainment, in the higheſt perfection, government ſhould ſtep forward, and, with a foſtering hand, lead to the accompliſhment of ſo meritorious a meaſure. As encloſure alone, without an additional ſtock, will operate partially; whereas if government were, either in conjunction with the proprietors, or by purchaſing ſuch waſtes in fee (where it might be racticable), to take them in their own hands, and apportion out the waſtes in moderate ſized farms, it would become a reſource to the nation of ineſtimable value, as well as a ſource of uſeful and productive labour, equal to fifty millions, and give employ to a million of ſouls that are at preſent precluded from honeſt means of exerting themſelves, becauſe they have no proſpect of their induſtry meeting its due reward.

If government, in adopting ſuch a meaſure, ſhould make an arrangement to give employment to ſo uſeful a body of men as agriculturiſts, and even advance ſums of *four or five hundred pounds*, in the nature of the exchequer loans formerly made to the mercantile body (only extending the times of payment to a longer period, or ſtipulate to receive merchantable grain at the fair market price, at a given period, in exoneration), in order to enable competent perſons to fit out ſuch farms, it would ultimately promote an additional produce of more than two million quarters of grain, excluſive of other articles of ſubſiſtence.

And, on the concluſion of peace, ſuch a ſyſtem might furniſh employment for ſome thouſands of thoſe noble fellows that have ſo gallantly fought our battles in every quarter of the globe, who, for want of an honeſt avocation on ſhore, are often driven into foreign ſervice; and ſome of the moſt valuable petty officers, as well as thoſe

in a more ſuperior ſphere, often degraded before the maſt, or obliged to embrace ſubordinate ſtations in the merchants' ſervice, to procure bread for their wives and children.—If ever any ſet of men had a claim on their country for ſuperior attention, this is the claſs. When the legions of Rome had fought the battles, and bled and conquered for the ſtate, they returned not only to ſhare their country's applauſe, but its produce: the Iö triumph was grateful to the ear, but an exuberant ſoil (a part of which was their own) enabled them to reliſh thoſe ſongs of triumph!—But how different, alas! are our modern heroes treated! With aching eye, and palpitating heart, have I often beheld a brave youth, who, with wounded boſom, and mutilated body, has been doomed to expect *that* charity from the tranſient paſſenger which *his* innate modeſty forbade him to *aſk*!—But I will not dwell on ſo miſerable a picture: the digreſſion was extorted by my feelings, on recollecting the different ſpectacles our ſtreets too often exhibit of the nature I have depicted.

It is true, neither ſeamen nor ſoldiers are much addicted to agriculture; but how many petty officers, and ſubaltern gentlemen, would prefer being placed in ſuch eligible farms to the ſcanty pittance of a half-pay allowance; and eſpecially thoſe who are too proud to beg, and too honeſt to ſteal; and yet muſt, when their ſhips are paid off, or their regiments reduced, be driven to the one or other alternative, or dooomed to behold their infant progeny writhing in the pangs of complicated miſery for want of healthy and ſufficient nutriment. How could the wealth of the ſtate be better laid out than in making a comfortable proviſion for ſuch men, and their well-educated families; and, by ſo ſalutary an arrangement, accompliſh, in one and the ſame operation, the gratitude and improvement of Great Britain?

And how many worthy perſons are there of other deſcriptions, in every part of the kingdom, who would gladly avail themſelves of ſuch means to eſtabliſh themſelves in rural comfort, who are perfectly competent to ſuch undertakings? Let Great Britain ſet the noble example of *coloniſing* (if I may be allowed the expreſſion) her *interior waſtes*; a comparatively trifling expence in the outſet will effect all the purpoſes of increaſed cultivation, which will carry with it all the other advantages of political œconomy. Extended empire has a ſonorous ſound, only adapted to the ears of ambitious men; but a compact, well cultivated, populous ſtate, rejoices the heart of the benevolent one. In this favoured iſle the *firſt man* in it is more emulous of the chief rank among the *latter*, than the *former* deſcription of human beings.

If immenſity of territorial dominion denoted the power of a ſtate, what ideas of terror would be excited on viewing the *Ruſſian* and *Britiſh* empires on the ſame map? and what admiration muſt the *ſuperior power* of the *leſſer ſtate* excite in the beholder? But to its compactneſs, rather than its extent, is that wonderful difference to be aſcribed; and, when our cultivation is improved to the higheſt pitch of which it is capable, Britain muſt become as invulnerable and opulent as wiſe laws and beneficent ſyſtems can poſſibly render a country!

Before I diſmiſs this ſubject, however, I muſt beg leave to treat of the great utility and advantage of boat-fiſheries, a reſource well worth the attention of government! When the convenience of our coaſt, creeks, bays, and rivers are adverted to, the ſcarcity and high price of fiſh excites no ſmall degree of ſurpriſe; and when we conſider the excellence and nutritious quality of the myriads of fiſh found on our coaſts, and in our rivers, the wonder is conſiderably increaſed;—but in this article, en-

groſſers, &c. are found, as well as in thoſe already enumerated. The ſcarcity is in a great meaſure imputable to the want of a greater number of boats, and men properly qualified for coaſt and river fiſhing. It becomes an important object, therefore, to give employment to an additional number of boats and men, for the more plentiful ſupply of the markets with fiſh.

To remedy the preſent defect, government ſhould grant a bounty to a certain number of boat-owners, who ſhall employ the greateſt number of boats, for coaſt or river fiſhing; and to ſuch boatmen as ſhall land the greateſt quantity of freſh fiſh for conſumption. Such a bounty would immediately operate as a ſtimulus on hundreds, perhaps thouſands, of well-qualified fiſhermen, and would alſo become a powerful incentive to a vaſt number of other perſons to engage in the fiſheries. Nor ſhould government ſtop here;—boats properly fitted out, and all the requiſite tackle for fiſhing in all ſituations, with the various apparatus neceſſary to enſure ſucceſs, ſhould be either lent, or ſold on the eaſieſt terms, to reſponſible perſons, or ſuch as could procure ſufficient ſureties for the payment or return of ſuch boats; and the payment or hire of ſuch boats ſhould be made at ſtated and convenient periods. The hire, or price of hire, of the boats ſhould in ſome meaſure be regulated by the quantum or quality of the fiſh caught by the hirer. A number of able and induſtrious men would certainly avail themſelves of ſuch eligible means of earning a ſubſiſtence, who have not means to procure a boat and the proper implements for fiſhing; and when a peace happily takes place, many a brave ſeaman, who may be averſe to huſbandry, would gladly embrace means of earning a comfortable livelihood on their own element on the terms to which I have alluded.

The expending a few thouſand pounds in order to fit out an additional number of boats to obtain ſuch an auxiliary in the article of ſubſiſtence, and to defray the expenſe of a bounty equivalent to their ſucceſs, would, in my humble opinion, become a very ſalutary meaſure, as it would, in the firſt inſtance, give employment to a great number of induſtrious men, who have not ſufficient means to engage in a line attended with an expenſe in the outfit not within their competence, and when it may be apprehended that the commodity would not for ſome time repay the coſt of outfit, and yet afford a reaſonable profit to enable the fiſhermen to maintain their families. Secondly, it would leſſen the conſumption of other articles of ſubſiſtence, and conſequently lower their price, by the occaſional ſubſtitution of an article of food equally palatable and wholeſome. And, laſtly, it would train up an additional number of uſeful hands for the ſea-ſervice, to anſwer future exigencies; for perſons engaged even in river-fiſhing ſoon become expert ſailors. It may be fairly concluded, therefore, that if ſuch a bounty did not increaſe national opulence, it would certainly tend to augment the number of that deſcription of perſons on whom its defence ſo materially and eſſentially depends. It would likewiſe greatly alleviate the diſtreſſes of the poor, who would be enabled to accompliſh the purchaſe of a nutritious meal of fiſh for a few pence, when they could not procure an equal weight in fleſh for as many ſhillings.

Nor is ſuch a meaſure new in principle; for the tonnage-bounties on the whale and white-herring fiſheries were founded on this policy. It was ſuppoſed the bounty in thoſe caſes tended directly to render the articles cheaper than they could otherwiſe be, and enable the adventurers to engage in thoſe concerns under more favourable terms,

and that the bounty would place them on a more equal footing with the Dutch and other nations, then moſt profitably engaged in thoſe fiſheries, who, for various reaſons, were enabled to conduct them on terms of greater advantage than we poſſibly could without the aid of ſuch a bounty. Thus a part of our capital was uſefully employed in bringing commodities to market, of which the price, without ſuch aid, would never have repaid the coſt and the neceſſary or ordinary profits of ſtock.

It muſt nevertheleſs be confeſſed, that this excellent meaſure, like many others, was greatly abuſed, particularly in the herring-buſs fiſhery, and an immenſe ſum from private contributors wholly ſunk in conſequence. How this extraordinary failure enſued is very difficult to account for, nor is it my purpoſe to make any inquiry into the matter; I only take leave to ſtate the principle, which was certainly excellent, but failed producing thoſe beneficial effects it was ſo well calculated to enſure, not from *natural* but *latent* cauſes. Thoſe who ſupported ſo noble and patriotic a meaſure were certainly entitled to our higheſt applauſe; while thoſe who perverted it to the vileſt purpoſes of rapacity and private extortion merit execration: and perhaps, after all, advantage was taken of the bounty being rather proportioned to the burthen of the veſſel than her diligence and ſucceſs in the fiſhery, and thereby throwing a temptation in the way of the owners to fit out veſſels for catching the *bounty* rather than the *fiſh*; for otherwiſe it would be impoſſible to account for our indifferent ſucceſs in thoſe fiſheries, eſpecially when we advert to the immenſe advantages which the Hanſeatic League, the Flemings, the Swedes, Danes, Dutch, and even our own anceſtors, derived from that inexhauſtible ſource of wealth, not only on our own coaſts, in the Baltic, and

North Seas, but even on the coaſts of Iceland: our failure being the more extraordinary, as engagements in extenſive fiſheries are peculiarly adapted to the genius of a great maritime ſtate.

But in allowing bounties on boats employed in coaſt and river fiſhing, abuſes may be guarded againſt, by making the bounty wholly depend on the diligence and ſucceſs of their managers rather than the ſize or outfits of the craft employed. Our own ſubjects may be as uſefully and profitably employed by this means as thoſe of other ſtates; and then we ſhould not be driven to import Swediſh herrings, when, under proper encouragement, thouſands might be uſefully employed in that profitable and moſt uſeful occupation on our own coaſts. To give ſtrength to my remarks, I will once more quote Dr. A. Smith, and give his own emphatical words on this important ſubject:—" A boat-fiſhery ſeems to be the mode " of fiſhing beſt adapted to the peculiar ſituation of Scot- " land, the fiſhers carrying the herrings on ſhore as faſt " as they are taken, to be either cured or conſumed freſh. " But the great encouragement which a bounty of thirty " ſhillings the ton gives to the buſs-fiſhery is neceſſarily " a diſcouragement to the boat-fiſhery, which, having " no ſuch bounty, cannot bring its cured fiſh to market " upon the ſame terms as the buſs-fiſhery. The boat- " fiſhery, accordingly, which, before the eſtabliſhment " of the buſs-bounty, was very conſiderable, and is ſaid " to have employed a number of ſeamen not inferior to " what the buſs-fiſhery employs at preſent, is now gone " almoſt entirely to decay in many parts of Scotland. " During certain ſeaſons of the year, herrings make no " inconſiderable part of the food of the common people. " A bounty which tended to lower their price in the " home market might contribute a good deal to the re-

" lief of a great number of our fellow-ſubjects, whoſe " circumſtances are by no means affluent."

This argument applies as well to the whole iſland as to Scotland, and may extend to every ſpecies of fiſh in their proper ſeaſons, either in the ſea or in rivers; and the payment of theſe bounties may be made in like manner as the bounty payable on the corn, and the whole buſineſs placed in a ſimilar way under the controul of the magiſtrates in the ſeveral vicinities to which the fiſh entitled to ſuch bounty may be brought for ſale. Or if it ſhould be deemed too minute and troubleſome to the country magiſtrates, who reſide at a diſtance from the ſmaller towns to which fiſh may be brought for ſale, ſome of the ſubordinate members of the civil eſtabliſhment may have the ſuperintendence of the buſineſs, ſubject to the controul of the neighbouring magiſtrates, who ſhould be authoriſed, at ſtated periods, to inquire into their operations, and confirm or annul them.

And if the corporation of the city of London, who have on all occaſions taken the lead where true patriotiſm and genuine benevolence called for their civic exertions, were to adopt this eligible plan (if government ſhould decline an immediate interference), and fit out a number of boats with the requiſite apparatus, in order to procure a conſtant and plentiful ſupply for the metropolis on the terms I have preſumed to recommend, it would certainly throw an additional luſtre on the nobleſt city of the globe, and might ſtimulate other towns and cities to follow ſo beneficial an example! Perhaps many a fellow-creature, anxious to procure honeſt means of ſubſiſtence, but unable, for want of means, to accompliſh their good intentions, might, in conſequence of the adoption of this meaſure, be ſnatched from inevitable ruin.

If it ſhould be founded in ſolemn truth that the pro-

duction of our ſoil is really inadequate to its population, the plans I have ventured to propoſe may merit ſerious conſideration: but if, after all that has been ſaid and written, ſanctioned by authorities that on every occaſion merit unqueſtionable credit, it ſhould be found that the ſcarcity is *factitious*, it becomes an object of the higheſt conſequence to the ſtate to adopt an efficient ſyſtem for ſupplying the people with the articles of *prime neceſſity* on terms that may place them within their graſp. Let government fully inveſtigate the cauſe and develope the myſtery of the dearth, for myſtery certainly exiſts in ſome quarter: perhaps the *Batavian policy*, in the article of their ſpices, may have furniſhed *Britiſh avarice* with a deteſtable precedent!

I ſhall now proceed to an hiſtorical deduction of the various prices of corn and other articles of ſuſtenance from the Norman conqueſt to the preſent æra; to which I ſhall add a ſummary account of the ſeveral ſtatutes enacted during all that period for regulating the prices and ſupplies of the different ſpecies of proviſions, and alſo to reſtrain and puniſh engroſſing, foreſtalling, regrating, and monopoly, as well thoſe that have been ſince repealed as ſuch as are ſtill in force;—in the courſe of which I have interſperſed ſome remarks on the difference in the articles of living from the above period to the preſent time, by which, as well as the maxims of our anceſtors, and the remedies they adopted in the times of dearth, ſome advantages may be deduced.

I ſhall only obſerve that this part of my work is compiled from the moſt authentic public records and the ableſt writers on the ſubject, and the authorities are all ſtated from whence my information is derived; to all which I have added ſome curious facts, that may tend to ſhow the prodigious increaſe in the

TRADE, CULTIVATION,
AND
GENERAL IMPROVEMENTS,
OF
GREAT BRITAIN.

A. D.

1125. THIS is the firſt authentic account we have of the dearth of corn ſince the Norman conqueſt, and mention hereof is made by biſhop Fleetwood in his Chronicon Precioſum, who ſtates that wheat then ſold for 6*s*. per quarter, which was certainly a prodigious price, when we conſider that the uſual price of corn had theretofore been 2*s*. a quarter, *i. e.* 6*s*. of our preſent money, while 6*s*. per quarter was, of courſe, equal to 18*s*. of our money; and, if we conſider that the rate of living was then in the proportion of ſeven to one cheaper than in our days, the price will be found equivalent to 126*s*. per quarter, a prodigious price in thoſe days. But the firſt famous and eminent ſtatute made for remedy was not until the 51ſt Henry III. intituled *Aſſiza Panis et Cereviſiæ*, *i. e.* aſſize of bread and beer, by which, in a great meaſure, may be underſtood the rate of living then.

1135. It is preſumed, Henry I. in 1135, on this account brought the tenants of his demeſne lands to pay him part of his rents in money inſtead of payment in kind, as was the cuſtom at that period in moſt parts of Europe.

1197. Corn was in this year ſo ſcarce in England, ſays biſhop Fleetwood in his Chronicon Precioſum, that a quarter of wheat was ſold for 18*s*. 8*d*. *i. e.* 2*l*. 16*s*. of our money, partly proceeding from unkind ſeaſons, but probably pro-

A. D. ceeding more from the improvident and ignorant management of the farmers and the knavery *of the corn-jobbers.*

1202 to 1205. Wheat, on account of rains and ſubſequent froſt, became ſo dear as 12*s.* the quarter, or 1*l.* 16*s.* of our money, which is equal to 9*l.* a quarter, compared to the value of living, or what 36*s.* would produce at the preſent rate of living, being five times to one, compared with thoſe days.

King John was the firſt that eſtabliſhed rates of pro-
1223. viſion. Wheat was 1*s.* 6*d.* or 4*s.* 6*d.* of our money, per quarter. Wheat roſe to 12*s.* or 36*s.* of our money, per quarter.

1237. { Wheat was at 3*s.* 4*d.* / Barley, 2*s.* / Oats, 1*s.* } per quarter this year.

Which was three times the value of our money;

Viz. { 10*s.* / 6*s.* / 3*s.* } Of our money, and at five times the rate of living would be equivalent to

{ 50*s.* / 30*s.* / 15*s.* } per quarter in theſe times.

1243-4. Corn was ſo plentiful, that wheat and peas were ſold at 2*s.* per quarter, or 6*s.* of our money; but in 1246 was ſo dear as to be at 16*s.* equal to 58*s.* of our money, and, at our rate of living, equivalent to 14*l.* 10*s.* per quarter.

1256. Wheat was now at the enormous price of 24*s.* equal to 72*s.* of our money. This biſhop Fleetwood attributes to great negligence in the government of thoſe times; and if we compare that price to our preſent rate of living, it muſt, at five times cheaper, have been equivalent to 18*l.* per quarter in theſe times; but if we reckon, as many

authors of great veracity do, the rate of living at ſeven times cheaper, it will be at the enormous rate of 25*l.* 4*s.* per quarter. A. D.

Statute 51ſt Henry III. after preamble, recites—"That "he had ſeen certain ordinances of his progenitors, kings "of England, in theſe words; *viz.* 'When a quarter of "wheat is ſold for 12*d.* then waſtel bread of a farthing "ſhould weigh 6*l.* 16*s.* *i. e.* 6lbs. 9oz. 12 dwts. according "to troy-weight." Then the ſtatute goes on to enact, "That bread cocket of the ſame corn ſhall weigh more "than waſtel, and bread made into ſimnel ſhall weigh "leſs than waſtel," &c. (of no uſe now to repeal, becauſe out of practice). Waſtel was a fine ſort of flour; yet ſimnel ſeems to have been finer than waſtel: from which name of ſimnel the cakes ſtill made in ſome counties took their name. And the ſtatute further adds thus: "That when a baker in every quarter of wheat (as "it is proved by the king's baker) may gain 4*d.* and the "bran and two loaves for advantage, or, over and above, "for three ſervants $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ for two lads $\frac{1}{2}d.$ for ſalt $^1d.$ for "kneading $\frac{1}{2}d.$ for candle $\frac{1}{4}d.$ for wood 2*d.*—in all (ſays "the ſtatute) $12\frac{3}{4}d.$ or 3*s.* and $2\frac{1}{4}d.$ of modern money, "may be ſufficient:"—yet, by the book of aſſize now in uſe, publiſhed by proclamation towards the latter end of Queen Elizabeth's reign, bakers in corporation towns, in regard they paid ſcot and lot, are allowed 6*s.* in every quarter of middle-priced wheat for their charge in baking; but country bakers only 4*s.*; ſo that when the middle-priced wheat is 30*s.* the quarter, you are to add 6*s.* for the aſſize of town bakers, and then look into the table of aſſize for 36*s.* in which caſe the penny-loaf ought to weigh 9 oz. 8 dwts. 1266.

The above ſtatute proceeds: "When a quarter of "wheat is ſold for 3*s.* or 3*s.* 4*d.* (10*s.* of our money), a "quarter of barley for 20*d.* or 2*s.* and a quarter of oats

A. D. "for 16*d.* then brewers in cities ought and may well af-
"ford to ſell two gallons of beer or ale for 1*d.* and out
"of cities three or four gallons for a penny." So that a gallon of ale was ſold for 1½*d.* of our money in cities, which, if as ſtrong as our modern common brewers' beer, which now ſells at 10*d.* per gallon, makes the difference of 8½*d.* per gallon, or in the proportion of 6½ to one in living, or all other things being ſuppoſed to be proportionably cheap. In prices, the neceſſaries of life are ſix or ſeven times as dear now as they were in king Henry IIId's time; yet in all probability, in years of great plenty, the difference of living *then* and *now* might be as ten is to one. This ſtatute concludes thus: "We have cauſed, at the "requeſt of the bakers of our town of Coventry, that "the ordinances aforeſaid, by tenor of theſe preſents, "ſhall be exemplified;" which ſhows that Coventry was a place of conſideration then, as indeed it had been long before the Norman conqueſt, having been the uſual reſidence of the kings and afterwards dukes of Mercia.

Wheat, according to Chronicon Precioſum, was now
1270. ſo exceedingly dear as 4*l.* 16*s.* per quarter, or 14*l.* 8*s.* of our money, a monſtrous price, if the biſhop's authorities may be depended on; nay, he ſays, it was ſome time in this year 6*l.* 8*s.* or 19*l.* 4*s.** of our money the quarter: ſo great, ſays the biſhop, was the famine of this year, that wheat ſold for 2*l.* 8*s.* per buſhel, or 19*l.* 4*s.* per quarter, which, at ſix times cheaper than the rate of living now, would be equal to 115*l.* 4*s.* !!! The calamity was ſo great, that almoſt all the ſilver in the kingdom was melted to purchaſe foreign corn.

1286. By the Chronicon Precioſum, wheat was now ſo cheap as 2*s.* 8*d.* per quarter, or 8*s.* of our money, the rate of

* It muſt be obſerved that this merely relates to the difference of living then and now, which was, on an average, ſix times cheaper than at preſent.

living being five times as cheap as in our times; and the same year was again so dear as 16*s*. (or 48*s*. per quarter of our money). The bishop, with seeming reason, ascribes such great and sudden alterations in the price of corn more to the want of skill and diligence in the farmers than to the inclemency of the heavens, and proceeds in his remark thus: "Possibly, too, there might even in "those times have been knavish tricks practised in this "business for private gain; and moreover it is much to "be questioned whether the government was sufficiently "diligent to prevent such sudden variations; all which "considerations make it difficult to form an exact com-"putation of the expence of living then compared to our "own times." A. D.

According to the Chronicon Preciosum, wheat was sold this year for 20*d*. the quarter, and, in some parts of England, at 6*d*. per quarter, and which prices were at this time set by the *Common Council of London!* 1299.

Proportion of living then to now, six to one at least.

☞ *Windmills were invented about this time.*

By the Chronicon Preciosum it appears, wheat was at 7*s*. 2*d*. malt 6*s*. oats 4*s*. per quarter. 1309.

The English parliament having petitioned king Edward II, and his council, in relation to the intolerable dearness of provision, it was thereupon enacted, "That "the best ox not fed with grain should be sold for 16*s*. and "no more, and if fed with corn for 24*s*. at most; the best "fat cow for 12*s*.; a fat hog of two years old for 3*s*. 4*d*.; a "fat wether unshorn for 20*d*. if shorn 14*d*.; a fat goose for "2½*d*. a capon 2*d*. a fat hen 1*d*. and 24 eggs for 1*d*. two "chickens for 1*d*. four pigeons 1*d*.; and those who would "not sell them at these rates should forfeit them to the "king." Although we may here observe some difference between the values put on some kind of provision then

A. D. and in our days, yet, upon an average, the difference of living then and now ſeems to be nearly five, or as ſix, is to one, always remembering that their money contained thrice as much ſilver as our money or coin of the ſame denomination does:—thus, for example, if a gooſe then coſt $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ *i. e.* $7\frac{1}{2}d.$ of our money, according to the proportion of ſix to one it would coſt 3*s.* 9*d.*

1315. The Chronicon Precioſum in this year gives us the very high price of proviſions, *viz.* By great rains wheat roſe to 40*s.* per quarter, or 6*l.* of our money; peas and beans to 1*l.*; malt to 13*s.* 4*d.* and good ale roſe to 2*d.* 3*d.* and 4*d.* per gallon, or 1*s.* of modern money.

1317. In this year, the Chronicon Precioſum, according to Stowe, makes the price of wheat ſo high as 80*s.* per quarter, or 12*l.* of our money; yet a very early and good harveſt brought it down to 6*s.* 8*d.* per quarter.

1327. In this year, being the firſt of Edward III. according to the Chronicon Precioſum, upon an inquiſition at Tunbridge in Kent, a capital meſſuage, with 70 acres of arable land, was worth no more than 35*s.* per annum; twelve hens ſold for 1*s.* 6*d.* a cock and thirteen hens for 1*s.* 7*d.* If wheat was proportionably cheap, then the rate or expence of living at this time muſt have been five or ſix times as cheap as in our days! Eighty acres of arable land was worth 20*s.* per annum, or 3*l.* of our modern money; that is, 3*d.* (which is 9*d.* of our modern money) per acre; meadow land was at 4*d.* and paſture at a 1*d.* per acre.

This account is corroborated by what James Howell, in his Londinopolis, ſays he had read, but does not quote the author, That in the firſt year of Edward III. in the year 1327, John of Oxford, a vintner of London, and afterwards lord-mayor, gave to the priory of the Holy Trinity in London two toſts of land, one mill, fifty acres

of wood, with the appurtenances, in Kentiſh Town, in value 20*s.* 3*d.* by the year, or about 3*l.* 0*s.* 9*d.* yearly of our money. A. D.

Mr. Madox, in his Firma Burgi, obſerves, that in the firſt year of King Edward III. ſundry incorporated trades were then exiſting in the city of London, as the taylors, armourers, ſkinners, goldſmiths, &c.; and various ſucceeding trades were incorporated in 1345, &c.

Southwark was an aſylum for rogues and bankrupts till 1327, when the bailiwick of Southwark was granted by the crown to the city of London.

Sir ROBERT COTTON'*s Records*, p. 21.

"'Sundry merchants of Lynn and Barton-upon-Hum- 1329.
" ber do undertake, at a certain price, to deliver 10,000
" quarters of all ſorts of grain at the town of Berwick
" and in the road to Leith; the wheat and malt at 9*s.*
" (this was dear, but freight and carriage muſt have been
" included), oats, beans, and peas, at 5*s.* per quarter,
" money then being three to one of our money."

Biſhop Fleetwood, in his Chronicon Precioſum, ob- 1336.
ſerves, that under this year corn was ſo plentiful, and money ſo ſcarce, that at London wheat was ſold at 2*s.* per quarter, an ox at 6*s.* 8*d.* a fat ſheep at 8*d.* a fat gooſe at 2*d.* a pig at 1*d.* and ſix pigeons for 1*d.* which cheapneſs, according to Knighton and Fabian, was occaſioned by King Edward III. gathering up all the money he could 1339.
get for carrying on his wars with France and Scotland, ſo that this could not be a permanent rule of expence of living for the future.

The biſhop of Ely's Chronicon Precioſum, from Sir Robert Cotton's Abridgment of the Records, relate, that ſeveral merchants undertook, in the year 1339, to deliver at Berwick and Leith 10,000 quarters of wheat and

A. D. malt, at 9*s.* per quarter, which was called a high price—ſtill remembering that 9*s.* contained as much ſilver as 27*s.* of our money.

The Chronicon Precioſum relates that workmen took their wages in wheat at 10*d.* per buſhel (i. e. as much as 2*s.* 6*d.*); larders or weeders and haymakers were paid 1*d.* per day, reapers of corn 2*d.* or 3*d.* per day, and their ſervants 1½*d.* per day.

1361. According to the Chronicon Precioſum, wheat was this year at 2*s.* the quarter, though it was two years before 26*s.* 8*d.* per quarter; two hens were ſold for 1*d.* and one hog for 1*s.* 6*d.*—money ſtill three to one.

1378. By the Chronicon Precioſum, it appears that wheat was now 4*s.* per quarter, or 10*s.* of our money, white wine at 6*d.* and red port at 4*d.* per gallon—living then four times cheaper than in our times.

1391. According to Knighton's Chronicle, a great dearth of corn and proviſion happening this year, the mayor took 2000 marks out of the orphan's fund for purchaſing of corn from beyond ſea for the benefit of the poor. Wheat being then at 16*s.* 8*d.* the quarter, equal to 5*l.* of our money; and to that ſum twenty-four aldermen added each 20*l.* (equal to 50*l.* now) for the ſame charitable purpoſe.

1416. Corn, according to Stowe's Survey of London, was this year ſo dear as to be ſold for 16*s.* per quarter, or about 38*s.* of our money *.

1434. The Chronicon Precioſum obſerves, that in this year England had a very wet autumn, and wheat was dear for the two ſucceeding years, *viz.* at 26*s.* 8*d.* per quarter, or 2*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*; yet, towards the cloſe of the year following, it fell again to 5*s.* 4*d.* per quarter, or 10*s.* 8*d.* of our money, which ſeems to have been near the uſual moderate or mean

* Probably occaſioned by Henry V.'s expedition to France.

price of a quarter of wheat, about that time, in favourable years;—wine being now at 12*d.* (or 2*s.* of our money per gallon): ſo the rate of living was ſtill about four times as cheap as in our days. A. D.

By ſtatute 15th Henry VI. cap. 2. it is recited, "That "corn being of ſmall price, that is, wheat at 6*s.* 8*d.* and "barley at 3*s.* 4*d.* per quarter, they may be carried forth "out of the realm without licence;" *viz.* 1436.

6*s.* 8*d.* i. e. 13*s.* 4*d.* of our preſent coin, per quarter.
3*s.* 4*d.* — 6*s.* 8*d.* ditto.

Value of money twice as much as our's, and living four times cheaper.

Henry VI. writes to Eric X. king of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, "That although England uſually "produces plenty of corn, yet, by reaſon of a rainy ſea- "ſon, corn, and more eſpecially rye, had this year failed "in moſt parts of it, wherefore he requeſts Eric to per- "mit a merchant of York (therein named) to ſupply "himſelf with what corn he may deſire to purchaſe, "hearing that there is plenty thereof in his dominions." 1439.

☞ The coins were not made equal to our preſent ſtandard of money till the reign of Edward VI.

The Chronicon Precioſum gives the price of proviſions for this year—Wheat 4*s.* 4*d.* or 8*s.* 8*d.* per quarter of our money; a fat ox at 31*s.* 8*d.* or 3*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.*; a hog at 3*s.* or 6*s.* of our money; pigeons 4*d.* per dozen, which would 1444.

be equal to wheat 43*s.* 4*d.* per quarter	-	-
A fat ox 15*l.* 8*s.*	-	-
A hog 1*l.* 10*s.*	-	-
A gooſe 2*s.* 6*d.*	-	-
Twelve pigeons 3*s.* 4*d.*		-

} now.

It was that ſame year enacted by parliament, that, when wheat was ſo cheap as 6*s.* 8*d.* per quarter, rye 4*s.*

A. D. barley 3*s*. thoſe three ſpecies of corn might be exported without a licence.

In 1445, Wheat as above.
Ale 1½*d*. per gallon.
Hay 3*s*. 6*d*. per load.
A young ſwan 3*s*.
A gooſe 3*d*.
100 ſtock fiſh 7*s*. 6*d*.
3000 red herrings for 31*s*.
Bullocks and heifers at 5*s*. each.

Theſe laſt were probably only calves.

1446. Sir Robert Cotton's Abridgment of the Records ſtates, that in the 23d year of Henry VI. 5000*l*. was granted by parliament for relief of the decayed towns.

☞ The ſtone edifice (ſtill partly ſtanding) called Leadenhall, was firſt erected for a public granary.

The Chronicon Precioſum ſays, a bailiff of huſbandry in England, at this time, had a yearly ſalary (beſides his diet) of 23*s*. 4*d*. and 5*s*. for his clothing yearly; a common ſervant in huſbandry had 15*s*.; the chief carter and chief ſhepherd 20*s*. with their diet, and 4*s*. each for clothing; a woman ſervant 10*s*. with diet, and for clothing 4*s*.; a free-maſon or maſter-carpenter had 4*d*. per day and his diet, and without diet 5½*d*.; a maſter-tiler, ſlater, rough-maſon, &c. with diet, 3*d*. without diet 4½*d*. or 9*d*. of our money; a woman labourer 2½*d*. and diet, and without diet 4½*d*. Money being then twice the value of our preſent money, the maſter-tilers, ſlaters, and rough-maſons, had what would be equal to 1*s*. 10½*d*. per day of our money, and the women labourers nearly the ſame; ſo that the expence of living now is near five times as much as it was at that time.

From the year 1450 to 1460, ſays Biſhop Fleetwood, A. D.
in his Chronicon Precioſum, wheat was never above 8*s.* per quarter, and in the year 1455 it was ſo very cheap as 1*s.* per quarter—Stowe ſays 14*d.* per quarter, and malt 17*d.* notwithſtanding the ſword was drawn between the houſes of York and Lancaſter (which uſually cuts down corn as well as men), and ale was per gallon 1*d.* to 1½*d.*: but from theſe ſurpriſingly cheap prices no certain rule can be determined concerning the rate of living.

By ſtatute 3d of Edward IV. c. 2. it was enacted, That 1462.
when the quarter of wheat did not exceed the price of 6*s.* 8*d.* rye 4*s.* barley 3*s.* no perſon ſhould import any of the three kinds of grain, upon forfeiture thereof.

This act was made in conſequence of the German merchants of the Steel-yard having imported large quantities of corn when that of England was at a low price, which excited great complaints among the farmers, and the landed intereſt ſuffered not a little from ſuch a circumſtance. But when the rates of corn in ſucceeding times became much higher, this ſtatute was repealed in the 21ſt of James I.

In the 11th volume of Rymer's Fœdera we have a re- 1465.
markable inſtance of the cheapneſs of living in theſe times.—King Edward IV. grants to the lady Margaret his ſiſter (afterwards ducheſs of Burgundy) an annual allowance of 400 marks, for her clothes and the other neceſſaries of her body, ſuitable to the dignity of our kingdom, ourſelf, and her—for wages and other expences for ſervants attending her; which annual allowance ſhe ſhall enjoy until we can provide for her properly by a ſuitable marriage. This being double the value of our money, or 800 marks, and living being 4½ cheaper than in our

A. D. days, it was equivalent to 2000 marks, or 1333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* ſterling, a ſtriking contraſt to the expence of modern times!

1466. In the ſame year, wheat, by Sir Robert Cotton's Records, was 6*s.* 8*d.* per quarter of eight buſhels, which was conſidered as the medium price between very cheap and very dear. Living was then $2\frac{1}{2}$ cheaper than in our days, and the corn double in value; therefore it is equal to 33*s.* 4*d.* per quarter, according to the preſent rate of living.

1470. In Rymer's Fœdera, vol. XI. p. 654, under the year 1470, there is a reſcript of king Edward IV. to Edward Dudley, his lieutenant of Ireland, declaring "that whoſoever ſhall ſeize on and bring him George duke of Clarence, and Richard earl of Warwick, ſhall for his reward have either 100*l.* per annum in lands, or elſe 1000*l.* in money, at his option." From which may fairly be inferred, that the then current value of land in England was ten years' purchaſe.

In vol. XI. p. 712, of the Fœdera, there is an account of maintaining the unfortunate Henry VI. in the tower, with the allowance of ten perſons in waiting on him for fourteen days, being in the whole but 4*l.* 5*s.* (which is not quite 8*s.* per day) for the king and his ten attendants: and, in the ſame record, the king's own diet for two days in the tower coſt but 3*s.* 10*d.* or 1*s.* 11*d.* per day.

1482. Anderſon's Origin of Commerce ſtates, that the fiſhing of England for exportation muſt have been conſiderable at this time, ſince, in the 22d year of king Edward IV, we find no leſs than four ſtatutes (though two of them are left out of our ſtatute-book) for the well-packing caſks of ſalmon, herrings, eels, and other barreled fiſh; yet there are ſeveral older ſtatutes for the preſervation of the fry of ſalmon, lampreys; and even as far

back as Edward the Iſt's time, eſpecially in the rivers Thames and Medway; but they related only to our home conſumption. A. D.

Beer was now brewed, the Flemings having found out the virtue of hops in this century, which was before conſidered as a uſeleſs weed; though it ſeems to have been diſcovered in Scotland ſomewhat earlier. 1482.

A proclamation in this year, by Richard III. offering a reward of 1000*l.* ſterling, or 100*l.* per annum, for the apprehenſion of the duke of Buckingham. Another ſtriking proof of the value of land being ſtill only ten years' purchaſe; and eſpecially as 1000 marks, or 100 marks annually, are offered by the tyrant, in another proclamation, for delivering up to him the marquis of Dorſet, the biſhop of Ely and Saliſbury. 1483.

According to the Chronicon Precioſum, wheat was this year ſo high as 24*s.* per quarter, which, by the then reduced value of money, was equal to 36*s.* per quarter; and living being ſtill twice and a half cheaper than in our days, made it equal to 5*l.* per quarter. 1486.

Lord Verulam, in his Life of Henry VII. obſerves that incloſures became more frequent in England, whereby quantities of arable land, which could not be manured without much people and families, were turned into paſture, being thereby eaſily managed by a few herdſmen; and tenancies for years, lives, and at will, whereon much of the yeomanry lived, were turned into demeſne. This bred a decay of the people, and by conſequence of towns, churches, tithes, &c. and alſo a diminution of ſubſidies and taxes—wherefore an act of parliament was, in this fourth year of Henry VII. made, c. 19. That all houſes of huſbandry, that were uſed with twenty acres of ground and upwards, ſhould be maintained and kept up for ever, with 1489.

A. D. a competent proportion of land to be *uſed and occupied* by them.

I take the words to be *uſed and occupied* to couple *tillage* with *reſidence*, and compel proprietors of land to adapt a portion of their eſtates and farms for cultivating wheat, &c.

☞ *Would not ſome ſimilar ſtatute in our days* (viz. *to compel all owners and occupiers of land to keep a certain portion in a ſtate of cultivation for growing grain, &c. and prevent laying down ſo much land into graſs farms*) *operate favourably.*

1492. In vol. XII. of the Fœdera, p. 471, is a licence from Henry VII. to a Fleming (therein named) to export fifty tons of ale, called beer (*quinquaginta dolia cereviſiæ vocatæ bere*); and in the ſame year we find one of the king's attendants into France was Petrus Vaneck, a brewer of Greenwich; both of which ſhow, as well as what I have already noticed, that beer was brewed before the reign of Henry VIII. contrary to the received opinion: the price did not then exceed 2*d.* per gallon.

In this ſame year the king made the law for regulating weights and meaſures, which remains in force to this day: and, among thoſe regulations, it was fixed, "that a quarter of corn ſhould conſiſt of eight buſhels, to be raiſed and ſtricken."

And, by a ſtatute of the 12th of that king, cap. 5. a buſhel was directed to contain eight gallons, and every ſuch gallon to weigh 8lbs. troy weight, and every ſuch pound, *i. e.* troy weight, to contain 12 ounces, and every ſuch ounce to weigh 20 ſterlings, or 20 penny-weights, and every ſterling or penny-weight to weigh 32 grains, of wheat taken from the middle of the year.

Biſhop Fleetwood obſerves, in his Chronicon Pre-

cioſum, that there was a good law of king Edgar, that there ſhould be the ſame money, the ſame weight, and the ſame meaſures, throughout the kingdom, but it was never well obſerved. The biſhop goes on to obſerve, What can be more vexatious, both to men of reading and practice, than to find, that when we go out of one county into another, they muſt learn a new language, or cannot buy or ſell any thing?—an acre is not an acre, nor a buſhel a buſhel, if you travel ten miles; a pound is not a pound, if you go from a goldſmith to a grocer; nor a gallon a gallon, if you go from an alehouſe to a tavern. What purpoſe does this variety ſerve? or what neceſſity is there, which the difference of price would not better anſwer and ſupply? *Do not theſe obſervations merit legiſlative attention, when other regulations are taken into conſideration?* A. D.

According to the Chronicon Precioſum, the price of wheat was ſo cheap as 4*s.* or 6*s.* of our money per quarter, and all other neceſſaries were proportionably cheap; ſo that it is probable the difference of living between part of Henry the VII's reign and our times might have been four times cheaper, and then the price of wheat would be equivalent to 24*s.* per quarter in our times. 1494.

By Madox's Formulare Anglicanum, p. 110, we find the lady Anne, daughter of Edward IV. ſiſter to Elizabeth the queen of Henry VII. who was married to the lord Howard, eldeſt ſon of the earl of Surry, had an allowance of 20*s.* per week for her exhibition, ſuſtentation, and convenient diet of meat and drink; alſo for two gentlewomen, one woman child, one gentleman, one yeoman, and three grooms, in all eight perſons, 51*l.* 11*s.* 8*d.* per annum, for their wages, diet, and clothing, by the year; and for the maintenance of ſeven horſes, yearly,

A. D. 16*l.* 9*s.* 4*d.* that is, for each horſe 2*l.* 7*s.* $0\frac{1}{2}$*d.* yearly—money being then one and a half heavier than our coin.

According to the Chronicon Preciosum, wheat was the ſame year 3*s.* 4*d.* per quarter, and a barrel of white herrings was then ſold at 3*s.* 4*d.*

1512. By the ſtatute 3d of Henry VIII. cap. 8. recites 12th of Edward II. anno Domini 1319; which is as follows; viz. "That no officer, who by virtue of his office was "bound to keep the aſſizes of wines and victuals, ſhall, "during his office, ſell wines or victuals either by whole-"ſale or retail."

"Now (ſays the firſt-named act) ſithen the making "of which ſtatute, many and the most parts of all the "cities, burghs, and towns corporate, within the realms "of England, be fallen in ruin and decay, and not inha-"bited with merchants and men of ſuch ſubſtances as "were at the time of making the aforeſaid ſtatutes; for "at this day the dwellers and inhabitants of the ſame ci-"ties and burghs be moſtly bakers, brewers, vintners, fiſh-"mongers, and other victuallers, and few or no other "perſons or ſubſtance be within many of the ſaid cities "and burghs at this day able to bear office within the "ſame, and to content, anſwer, and pay unto the king's "grace his fee-farm, wherewith they (*i. e.* the cities and "burghs) be charged."

It was now enacted, for the eaſe, comfort, and relief of the aforeſaid poor cities, burghs, and towns corporate,—"that whenſoever, and as often as any victualler is choſen "to bear any office which ſhould have the aſſizing and "correction for the ſelling of victuals, that then two diſ-"crete and honeſt perſons of the ſame city or burgh, not "being victuallers, ſhall be choſen by the commonalty of "the ſame city or burgh; which two perſons, jointly with "the ſaid officer, ſhall be ſworn to ſet the aſſizes or prices

" of victuals during the ſaid victualler's office: and then A. D.
" it ſhall be lawful for the ſaid victualler in office to
" ſell wines and victuals by wholeſale or retail. Pro-
" vided that this act ſhall not extend to diſcharge any
" miniſter (aforeſaid) of the cities of London, York, and
" Coventry, for any wine or victuals to be ſold by retail
" within the ſaid cities."

Recites a law made (in the 4th of Henry VII. cap. 19.)
" againſt decaying houſes of huſbandry, or not laying
" of convenient land for the maintenance of the ſame."

The ſame evil ſtill prevailed; that is, much arable land was incloſed and turned into paſture.

A freſh law was therefore made in the fourth year of 1516.
king Henry VIII. cap. 5. importing, " That whoſoever
" decayeth any town or houſe of huſbandry, or ſhall con-
" vert tillage into paſture, ſhall forfeit to the lord of the
" fee half the profit thereof." Yet this not being thought ſufficient, the next year an act of the ſeventh of this king, cap. 1. was made, " That if any perſon ſhall decay a town,
" a hamlet, or houſe of huſbandry, or convert tillage into
" paſture, the immediate lord of the fee ſhall have the moiety
" of the offender's land until the offence be reformed."
Theſe foregoing acts plainly demonſtrate the humour of people in thoſe times in favour of paſturage; and it is evident the legiſlature perceived the danger of ſuffering it to increaſe, by the enacting of thoſe laws.

By a ſtatute of the 25th of Henry VIII. cap. 13. to 1534.
prevent the cuſtom of engroſſing a great number of ſheep into one man's hands, it was enacted,

" I. That none ſhall keep above two thouſand four
" hundred ſheep, excluſive of lambs, at any one time,
" unleſs it be on his own lands of inheritance, in which
" caſe he is not hereby limited, nor are ſpiritual per-
" ſons."

A. D. ☞ "II. No man ſhall hold above two farms: in the "pariſh of one of which two he ſhall be obliged to live "and reſide himſelf."

1548. A ſtatute was made in the ſecond and third of Edw. VI. cap. 15. "For reſtraining the ſellers of all manner of pro- "viſion in England from combining together, not to ſell "but at a fixed price."

By the fifth and ſixth of Edward VI. cap. 14. it was enacted, "That whoſoever ſhould buy any corn or grain "with intent to ſell it again, ſhould be reputed an un- "lawful engroſſer; and ſhould, for the firſt fault, ſuffer "two months' impriſonment, and forfeit the value of the "corn; for the ſecond ſuffer ſix months' impriſonment, "and forfeit double the value; and, for the third, be ſet in "the pillory, ſuffer impriſonment during the king's plea- "ſure, and forfeit all his goods and chattels."

Our anceſtors, by this ſyſtem, endeavoured to prevent, as much as poſſible, any *middle man* of any kind from coming in between the *grower* and *conſumer*; and this was the meaning of the many reſtraints which they impoſed upon the trade of thoſe whom they called kidders or carriers of corn, a trade which nobody was allowed to exerciſe without a licence aſcertaining his qualifications as a man of probity and fair dealing.

But even this reſtraint was afterwards thought inſufficient; and, by a ſtatute of Elizabeth, the privilege of grant-
1560. ing licences was confirmed to the quarter-ſeſſions. The ancient policy of England endeavoured in this manner to regulate agriculture by maxims quite different from thoſe which it eſtabliſhed with regard to manufactures, by leaving the farmers no other cuſtomers but either the conſumers or their immediate factors.

Wheat was this year 5*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* per quarter—an enormous price! A. D. 1597.

Monopolies being very numerous, they were petitioned againſt to the houſe of commons; whereupon, before queen Elizabeth was actually addreſſed, ſhe readily annulled moſt of the grants, leaving the reſt to the due courſe of the law. 1601.

In 1603 king James iſſued a proclamation *for annulling ſeveral monopolies*; and at the opening of his firſt parliament ſpoke ſharply againſt them, although he afterwards gave great encouragement to them. 1603.

By a ſtatute of the firſt year of king James I. cap. 25.
" When wheat is not above one pound ſix ſhillings and
" eight-pence per quarter; rye, peaſe, and beans fifteen
" ſhillings; and barley and malt fourteen ſhillings per
" quarter; they may be exported in Engliſh ſhips, paying
" cuſtom two ſhillings per quarter for wheat, and one
" ſhilling and four-pence for the other kinds."

King James I. now iſſued a proclamation, wherein he obſerves, " That in times of dearth the poorer ſort of his
" people are pinched with great want and dear prices of
" corn; that the treaſure of the kingdom, alſo, in thoſe
" times is much exhauſted in providing of corn from fo-
" reign parts; and on the contrary, in times of plenty, the
" farmers, by the low prices of corn, are hardly able to
" ſupport their neceſſary charge and pay their rents;—and
" foreſeeing, as well by reaſon as by example of foreign
" nations, that ſuch things may not only in ſome good
" meaſure be remedied, but alſo the increaſe of tillage may
" be procured and the better vending of our native com-
" modities, ſtrength to our ſhipping, and the breeding of
" many mariners, by the erecting of magazines of corn,
" which in times of ſcarcity may ſerve to keep down the
" price of foreign corn; and in times of plenty may keep 1623.

A. D. " up the price of our home corn, at ſuch reaſonable " rates as will well maintain the huſbandman's labour, " and hold up the gentleman's rents;—upon deliberate " advice with our privy council, we ordain, 1. That " magazines of corn ſhall be erected, &c. &c."

In the year 1624, and in the twenty-firſt of the reign of king James I. there was an act of parliament, " Whereby all monopolies, and all commiſſions, grants, " licences, and charters, formerly made or granted, or " ſhall hereafter be granted, either to perſons or corpo- " rations, for the ſole buying, ſelling, making, working, " or uſing of any thing, are made void, &c. &c.—and " alſo, that all ſuch monopolies ſhall be henceforth " for ever tried and determined by the common law of " this realm, and not otherwiſe. And all perſons are " hereby diſabled to uſe any monopoly; and perſons ag- " grieved thereby ſhall recover treble damages, and dou- " ble coſts."

1624. By an act of parliament of the twenty-firſt of king James I. cap. 28. it was enacted, " That when wheat is " not above one pound twelve ſhillings per quarter; " rye twenty ſhillings per quarter; peas, beans, barley, and " malt, ſixteen ſhillings at the port whither they are " brought to be exported, they may then be exported," and a ſimilar act of the third of king Charles I. cap. 4. in the year 1627, granted ſuch licence, and fixed the ſame rate.

1630. In 1630 there was a proclamation of king Charles, wherein he takes notice of the abuſes committed by engroſſers, badgers, broghers, and buyers of corn.

The purport of this proclamation was to leſſen the conſumption of proviſions, by a ſtrict obſervance of Lent, &c.

In this year alſo king Charles moſt laudably commiſſions a number of his great officers of ſtate " to in-

" quire into the fiſhery on the Britiſh coaſts, how the A. D.
" ſame may be rendered more beneficial to the nation, by
" framing a general fiſhery company, compoſed of ſome
" of each of his three kingdoms; for which end he here-
" in premiſes to iſſue like commiſſions to Scotland and
" Ireland."

In the eighteenth year of king Charles II. cap. 2. pro- 1666.
hibiting the importation of lean or fat cattle, &c.

☞ A proof how little we then ſtood in need of foreign aid, wheat was, in this year, at one pound ſixteen ſhillings per quarter according to the Chronicon Preciofum.

Wheat, this year, at two pounds one ſhilling and eight- 1670.
pence per quarter, according to the Chronicon Preciofum.

By an act of parliament of the twenty-ſecond of king Charles II. cap. 13. it was enacted, " That when wheat
" was not above two pounds thirteen ſhillings and four
" pence per quarter, it ſhould, upon exportation, pay
" cuſtom and poundage per quarter, *viz.*

	£.	*s.*	*d.*
" From that price to four pounds per quarter	0	16	0
" Rye, at about two pounds, to pay - -	0	8	0
" Barley and malt, not above one pound twelve " ſhillings, to pay - - - -	0	16	0
" Oats, at ſixteen ſhillings per quarter, to pay	0	5	4
" Peas and beans, at two pounds, to pay - -	0	16	0"

By an act of parliament this year, in the firſt ſeſſion of 1689.
the firſt year of king William and queen Mary, cap. 22.
it was enacted, " That when malt or barley is at one
" pound four ſhillings per quarter, or under; rye at one
" pound twelve ſhillings, and wheat at two pounds eight
" ſhillings per quarter; then it ſhall not only be lawful to

A. D. " export the ſame, but the exporters ſhall alſo receive the " following bounties; *viz.* For malt or barley per quarter " two ſhillings and ſix-pence, rye three ſhillings and ſix- " pence, wheat five ſhillings per quarter, without requi- " ring any thing for cuſtoms or fees whatever, provided " ſecurity be given for ſuch corn being legally landed be- " yond ſea, and that the ſhip and its crew, in which it " ſhall be exported, be duly qualified according to the acts " of navigation."

This was the firſt law for allowing any bounty on corn exported, which bounties have in general been deemed ſo beneficial to the landed intereſt, by enabling tenants to pay their rents in years of plenty, that, unleſs in years of ſcarcity, when the current prices were higher than the above-named ones, it has been judged prudent to continue the ſame. How much this bounty contributed to the improvement of huſbandry is too obvious to be diſputed *; yet ſome are of opinion, that, inſtead hereof, all the corn of plentiful years ſhould, by the public, be purchaſed of the farmers at a moderate price, to be laid up in granaries againſt a year of dearth. This would not only be a great help to our poor in a year of ſcarcity, but would bring foreign ſhips to purchaſe it at our price, and would alſo employ great numbers of our own ſhips for ſupplying other nations, at higher rates, as is done in Holland.

1700. In the 11th year of king Willliam an act of parliament paſſed, cap. 20. for taking away the duties upon our woollen manufactures, corn, grain, bread, biſcuit, and meal exported; ſo that from thenceforth no manner of duty was to be paid on our exported woollen goods, on our corn and grain of all kinds, as alſo of our meal, malt, pulſe, and bread expo ted.

The biſhop of Ely, in his Chronicon Precioſum, gives

* Will not a bounty on production be ſtill more beneficial?

the true market price of wheat and malt for ſixty years, *i. e.* from 1646 to 1705, both incluſive. The higheſt price of wheat was four pounds five ſhillings per quarter in the year 1648; and of malt, in the year 1659, two pounds eight ſhillings and eightpence;—and the loweſt price of wheat, in all that period, was one pound five ſhillings and twopence in the year 1687, and of malt, in 1681, ſeventeen ſhillings and fourpence. Thoſe of 1705 were one pound ten ſhillings for wheat, and one pound ſix ſhillings for malt. Medium for wheat, between thoſe two prices, is two pounds fifteen ſhillings and a penny; medium for malt, between thoſe two prices, is one pound thirteen ſhillings.

The biſhop obſerves, firſt, That there are two prices of corn in every year, viz. that at Lady-day and that at Chriſtmas, both which he put together, and took half of the ſum for the common price of that whole year.

Secondly, Of the firſt twenty years of the ſaid ſixty years, the price of wheat was two pounds ſeventeen ſhillings and fivepence halfpenny, and of malt one pound twelve ſhillings and three farthings, per quarter.

Thirdly, For the ſecond twenty years, from 1666 to 1685, wheat two pounds ſix ſhillings and threepence three farthings, and malt one pound five ſhillings and threepence three farthings.

Fourthly, In the laſt twenty years, viz. from 1686 to 1705, wheat two pounds five ſhillings and ninepence three farthings, and malt one pound five ſhillings and fivepence farthing.

Fifthly, One year with another, for the ſaid ſixty years, wheat was two pounds nine ſhillings and tenpence halfpenny, and malt one pound ſeven ſhillings and ſevenpence farthing.

A ſimilar fluctuation in the rates of corn is ever to be

A. D. expected, and has accordingly happened down to our own times.

1710. In the 8th Anne, chap. 18. is the following preamble: —"Whereas, the ſtatute of the fifty-firſt year of king "Henry III. in the year 1266, intituled, *Aſſiza Panis et Ce-* "*reviſiæ*, (i. e. for ſettling the aſſize of bread and ale,) being "now obſcure and otherwiſe impracticable for modern "times, the poorer ſort of people more eſpecially had ſince "been deceived and oppreſſed by an almoſt total neglect, in "many places, of the due aſſize and reaſonable price of "bread;" for remedy whereof, and that a plain and conſtant rule and method may henceforward be duly obſerved and kept in the making and aſſizing of the ſeveral ſorts of bread made for ſale, therefore it was enacted, "That ſo "much of the ſtatute of the ſaid fifty-firſt year of Hen- "ry III. as relates to the aſſize of bread, be repealed; and "that, from the 1ſt of May 1710, the court of the lord- "mayor and aldermen of London and its liberties, or the "lord-mayor alone, by the order of the ſaid court, and "the mayor, bailiffs, aldermen, and other chief magiſ- "trates of any other city or towns corporate, and two or "more juſtices of the peace in ſuch places where there "ſhall be no ſuch mayor, &c. ſhall reſpectively, and "from time to time, aſcertain and appoint, within their "reſpective juriſdictions, the aſſize and weight of all ſorts "of bread to be ſold by any baker or other perſon what- "ſoever, having reſpect to the price which the grain, "meal, or flour, whereof ſuch bread ſhall be made, ſhall "bear in the ſeveral public markets in or about the city, "town corporate, burgh, or place, where ſuch aſſize "ſhall be ſo ſet, making reaſonable allowance to the "bakers for their charges, pains, and livelihoods; the "ſaid aſſize to be ſet in avoirdupois weight, &c.

1736. In this year an account was laid before the Britiſh

houſe of commons of the ſeveral ſorts and quantities of corn which had been exported from England between Chriſtmas 1734 and Chriſtmas 1735, with the total of the bounty thereon; viz.

	Qrs.		£.
Barley - -	57,520	Bounty - -	7,190
Malt - -	219,781	Ditto - -	26,434
Oatmeal - -	1,921	Ditto - -	240
Rye - - -	1,329	Ditto - -	232
Wheat - -	153,343	Ditto - -	38,335

Total number of quarters of the ſeveral kinds of corn was 433,894 quarters.—Total bounty paid, 72,431 pounds.

Prices of Grain at Mark-Lane and Bear-Key for Fifteen ſucceſſive Years.

Years.	Wheat.	Barley.	Oats.
	s. s.	s. s.	s. s. d.
1742 - -	26 to 29	15 to 20	12 to 15
1743 - -	20 — 23	15 — 20	13 — 16
1744 - -	19 — 21	11 — 13	9 — 12
1745 - -	18 — 20	12 — 15	12 — 16
1746 - -	17 — 24	10 — 13	12 — 14
1747 - -	27 — 30	8 — 12	7 — 11
1748 - -	26 — 28	13 — 14	9 — 12
1749 - -	27 — 32	17 — 18	14 — 16
1750 - -	24 — 27	14 — 17	12 — 13
1751 - -	24 — 27	14 — 17	12 — 13
1752 - -	20 — 25	10 — 13	9 — 11
1753 - -	29 — 35	17 — 18	10 — 12
1754 - -	27 — 33	17 — 19	12 — 13
1755 - -	24 — 26	12 — 14	10 — 13
1756 - -	22 — 26	14 — 15	12 — 13 6

A. D. 1757. The year 1757 proved to be an extremely ſcarce year all over Europe, not only for wheat corn but for various other kind of proviſions, whereby the poor of Great Britain ſuffered not a little for their daily ſuſtenance, and even perſons of middling circumſtances were put to a conſiderable additional expence, many graziers, butchers, bakers, fiſh-mongers, &c. taking, we fear, too much advantage of the general dearth.

And as three ſhillings and ſixpence per buſhel, or one pound eight ſhillings per quarter, is deemed a low or cheap price for wheat, and that five ſhillings per buſhel, or forty ſhillings per quarter, has uſually been deemed the medium or middling price, we ſhall here exhibit the rates of wheat at London in every month of the ſaid year of dearth, 1757, as ſold at the Corn Exchange in Mark-Lane; viz.

	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
In Jan. 1757, per quarter, Wheat	from 2 9 0	to 2 10 0
February - - -	from 2 7 0	to 2 11 0
March - - -	from 2 6 0	to 2 14 0
April - - - - - -		3 4 0
May - - - - - -		3 4 0
June - - - -	from 3 7 0	to 3 12 0
July - - - - - -		2 18 0
Auguſt - - - - - -		1 14 0
September - - - - -		2 8 0
October - - - - - -		2 6 6
November - - - - -		2 2 0
December - - - - -		2 2 0

For the remedying of that evil, many expedients were debated both within and without doors, which at length produced the following ſtatutes of the ſaid thirtieth year of George II. viz.

I. " An act to prohibit, for a time to be limited, the exportation of corn, malt, meal and flour, bread, biſcuit, and ſtarch. A. D.

II. " An act to diſcontinue, for a limited time, the duties upon corn and flour imported, &c.

III. " An act to prohibit the exportation of corn, grain, meal, malt, flour, beef, pork, bacon, &c. from America, unleſs to Great Britain or Ireland, and to permit the importation thereof into Great Britain and Ireland in neutral ſhips, &c.

IV. " An act for continuing the laſt-named act for diſcontinuing the duties upon corn and flour imported, &c.

V. " Alſo an act for continuing an act of this ſame ſeſſion, to prohibit, for a limited time, the making of low wines and ſpirits from wheat, barley, malt, &c. or from any meal or flour."

By a ſtatute of the ſeſſion of parliament, 31 Geo. II. an act was paſſed for the due making of bread, and to regulate the price and aſſize thereof; and to puniſh perſons who ſhall adulterate meal, flour, or bread. This act was principally occaſioned by accounts daily publiſhed of certain bakers mixing lime, alum, and other unwholeſome ingredients, in that time of ſcarcity, in their bread. The legiſlature therefore took the matter into their ſerious conſideration; and took this opportunity, likewiſe, of examining an act of the fifty-firſt of king Henry III. intituled, *Aſſiza Panis et Cereviſiæ*, i. e. the Aſſize of Bread and Ale; and another act of the eighth year of queen Anne, to regulate the price and aſſize of bread, whereby ſo much of the before-named act, as related to the aſſize of bread, was repealed; which act of queen Anne, with ſeveral alterations and amendments made thereto by ſome ſubſequent acts, was continued until the 24th of June, 1757, and to the end of the then next ſeſſion of parliament. 1758.

A. D. This preſent ſtatute, therefore, reduced into one act all the ſeveral laws in force relating to the due making, and the prices and aſſize of bread; all preceding ſtatutes being hereby repealed, and new tables for the aſſize and prices of the various kind of bread were therein promulgated, as alſo what relates to the prices of the three ſorts of wheat, wheaten and houſehold flour, of rye and rye-meal, of barley and barley-meal, of oats and oatmeal, of white peas, and white peas' flour or meal, and of beans and bean-flour.

Several clauſes were alſo added for preventing frauds in the prices of corn, flour and meal, and for puniſhing of any bakers who ſhall mix different ſorts of flour or meal in their bread, or ſhall put into their bread any unwholeſome ingredients.

1765. A bill to enable his majeſty, with the conſent of the privy council, to prohibit the exportation of corn, during the receſs of parliament, received the royal aſſent in the parliamentary ſeſſion of this year.

And alſo another to allow the free importation of corn, and to diſcontinue the bounty on corn exported.

1767. A bill to continue for a further limited time the free importation of wheat and wheat-meal from any part of Europe, and to diſcontinue the duties payable on the importation of barley-meal and pulſe, received the royal aſſent this ſeſſion of Parliament.

Alſo another for empowering his majeſty to permit the importation of corn, duty-free, for a further limited time.

The quantity of corn brought into the port of London, between the 3d of March and the 2d of July, in conſequence of the different acts paſſed for the importation of that neceſſary article, amounted to 115,497 quarters.

1770. A bill received the royal aſſent this year for regiſtering

he prices at which corn is ſold in the ſeveral counties of Great Britain. The preamble to this act only ſuggeſts that a regiſter of the prices at which corn is ſold in the ſeveral counties of Great Britain will be of public and general advantage, for which reaſon the juſtices of the peace for each county in Great Britain are required, at their quarter-ſeſſions next after September 29, annually to direct returns to be made weekly of the prices of wheat, rye, barley, oats, and beans, from ſo many market-towns within their reſpective counties as they ſhall think proper, not being leſs than two, nor more than ſix, and to appoint a proper perſon to ſend the ſame to a perſon to be appointed to receive them; and in caſe ſuch perſon ſhall die, neglect his duty, or become incapable of performing it, any two juſtices acting for the county may appoint another till the next quarter-ſeſſions, at which the juſtices may either confirm ſuch appointment or chooſe another.—By this act, the meal-weighers of the city of London are to take an account of the prices at the markets within the ſaid city, and return the average weekly to the perſon appointed to receive the ſame.

" The juſtices for each county ſhall cauſe alſo a ſtandard Wincheſter buſhel of eight gallons to be kept at every market-town from whence ſuch returns ſhall be made; and ſuch returns ſhall be the average prices by the cuſtomary meaſure of each reſpective market, and alſo by that Wincheſter buſhel.

" By this act the lord high-treaſurer is empowered to appoint a fit perſon to receive the returns at the treaſury, and to enter them fairly in a book kept for that purpoſe. And all exports and imports of grain from and into Great Britain, with the bounties paid and received thereon, to be tranſmitted annually to the ſame perſon, and regiſtered in proper books by the perſon appointed to re-

ceive the returns of the prices from the ſeveral counties. It was enacted to continue in force for ſeven years."

An ACCOUNT *of the Average Price of* CORN *in* ENGLAND *and* WALES, *by the Standard Winchester Buſhel, for Eight Years, from the Commencement of the Corn-Regiſter Act in the Year* 1770.

YEAR.	Wheat.	Rye.	Barley.	Oats.	Beans.
	s. d.	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*
1771	5 10½	4 3½	3 2½	2 1	3 6¾
1772	6 4	4 7	3 2	2 0¼	3 9
1773	6 4½	4 2	3 6½	2 1¼	4 1½
1774	6 7	4 3½	3 6¾	2 2¾	3 10¾
1775	6 0½	4 1¼	3 3	2 0¾	3 7
1776	4 9¼	3 4¼	2 6¼	1 10½	3 3¾
1777	5 8¼	3 6	2 6¾	1 11½	3 6¾
1778	5 3	3 6½	2 10	1 10¾	3 5½
Average of the 8 Years.	5 10½	3 11¾	3 1	2 0½	3 8

The prices of the fineſt and coarſeſt ſorts of grain generally exceed, and reduce the average price as follows; *viz.*

Per buſhel—wheat, 6*d.*; rye, 3*d.*; barley, 3*d.*; oats, 3*d.*; beans, 6*d.*

The following TABLE will ſhow the Quantity of WHEAT and FLOUR exported from 1779 to 1786.

YEAR.	The Article.	Britiſh Qrs.	Foreign do.	Import. do.
1779.	Wheat, wheat-meal, and wheat-flour, exported this year was - - - -	203,189	9,576	4,611

Bounty paid on exportation was 54,506*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*

Average — wheat, 4*s.* 2½*d.*; rye, 2*s.* 11*d.*; barley, 2*s.* 5¼*d.*; oats, 1*s.* 9*d.*; beans, 3*s.* 0¼*d.*; per ſtandard Wincheſter buſhel.

YEAR.	The Article.	Britiſh Qrs.	Foreign do.	Import. do.
1780.	Britiſh wheat, and wheat-flour - -	200,179	7,999	3,040
	From Scotland - -	15,874	Ditto	873

Bounties and drawbacks on corn exported, 77,745*l.* 14*s.* 1¼*d.*

Average price of corn in England and Wales, by the ſtandard Wincheſter buſhel, as follows:

Wheat, 4*s.* 5½*d.*; rye, 2*s.* 9¼*d.*; barley, 2*s.* 1¼*d.*; oats, 1*s.* 7¼*d.*; beans, 2*s.* 9¼*d.*

YEAR.	Wheat.	Rye.	Barley.	Oats.	Beans.
	s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*
1781	5 7	3 4½	2 1¾	8½	2 10½
1782	5 11¾	3 7¼	2 9¾	1 10¾	3 3
1783	6 7	4 5½	3 9½	2 5¾	4 4¼
1784	6 1¼	4 0¼	3 5¾	2 3½	4 0¼
1785	5 2¾	3 6	3 0	2 1¾	3 10
1786	4 10¼	3 4¾	3 0½	2 3	4 1¾

It may, perhaps, be worth attention, that, from the Reſtoration to the preſent æra, the tonnage of Britiſh trading ſhipping increaſed from ninety-five thouſand two hundred and ſixty-ſix tons to more than twelve hundred thouſand tons; the number of veſſels conſtituting ſuch tonnage amounting to ſeventeen thouſand two hundred and ninety-five, and navigated by near one hundred and thirty thouſand men and boys!

A prodigious increaſe in little more than one hundred and thirty years!

The ANNUAL PRODUCT of the under-mentioned MANUFACTURES in 1780 was calculated in the following Manner:

Woollen - - - - - -	£.16,800,000
Leather - - - - - - -	10,500,000
Flax - - - - - - - -	1,750,000
Hemp - - - - - - -	890,000
Glaſs - - - - - - -	630,000
Paper - - - - - - -	780,000
Porcelain - - - - - -	1,000,000
Silk - - - - - - - - -	3,350,000
Cotton - - - - - - -	960,000
Lead - - - - - - -	1,650,000
Tin - - - - - - - -	1,000,000
Iron - - - - - - - -	8,700,000
Steel-plating - - - -	3,400,000
Total - - - -	£.51,410,000

The iron, glaſs, and porcelain, then on a rapid increaſe.

Tin and leather declining.

Paper increaſing.

Flax rather falling.

Hemp ſtationary.

Silk rather increaſing.

His Grace of Portland is ſaid to be in poſſeſſion of a calculation that makes the fabrics employ 5,250,000 ſouls!—Since the above well-authenticated document was publiſhed, an amazing increaſe has taken place in all the manufactures.

From the accounts of the Iriſh fiſhery in this year, we find that the herrings came upon the north-weſt coaſt of Ireland about the laſt week in June, and continued until about the laſt week in September. At firſt they were of ſmall ſize, but increaſed conſiderably; and latterly they were large, but by no means the ſize of the winter herrings. It is almoſt impoſſible to make any kind of ſatisfactory conjecture of the numbers that were taken. There was, for a conſiderable part of that time, no other demand than from the country about thirty miles round; while the take was ſo very great, and the demand ſo ſmall, that incredible numbers were thrown away; and, upon an average price for a month, they did not exceed 10*d.* per thouſand. The number was at times ſo great, that 4*d.* 5*d.* or 6*d.* was the price of a horſe-load, and there was no reſtriction as to the load. They were boiled for oil, the price of which was 10*d.* per gallon, and was very good for lamps. This kind of oil was much uſed by curriers. The number of boats employed in the herring-fiſhery was from 70 to 100; and during the height of the ſeaſon each boat could have taken, at leaſt, as many more as they did, as it was ſeldom neceſſary to ſhoot their nets more than once for the boat-load. As to the ſum each boat made, it is ſaid to be about 54*l.*; and, computing the price of herrings to be 20*d.* per thouſand, each boat took 648,000, which, multiplied by 70 (the loweſt number of boats employed), makes the number amount to 45,360,000, excluſive of what were boiled for oil and thrown away. It may not, perhaps, be improper to obſerve in this place, that the ſuppoſition of herrings taken in July, Auguſt, and September, being incapable of a proper ſtate of curing on account of their very extraordinary richneſs, is founded in

error, as it appears from experiment, that, if a ſufficient quantity of ſalt is uſed, they may be preſerved as well as the winter-herrings; but by not taking proper care, and an injudicious ſaving of ſalt, the commodity has been brought into diſrepute.

AN ACCOUNT

AN ACCOUNT of the Variations in the Rate of Duty on Corn-Waſh, from Midſummer 1749 to Midſummer 1786, calculated from the reſpective Variations in the Duties on low Wines and Spirits; together with an Account of the average Quantity of Spirits annually made, and the average Amount of the Duties annually collected, under each Rate.

YEARS.	Average Quantity of Spirits annually made.	Rate per Gallon of the Waſh.	Aver. Amount of the Duties annually collected.
	GALLONS.	*d.*	£. s.
1750	6,571,305	1¾	319,321 0
1751			
1753			
1754	4,548,800	2¾ 2/15	353,758 0
1755			
1756			
1761	2,714,119	6¾ 2/10	474,957 0
1763			
1764			
1765			
1766			
1768			
1769			
1770			
1771	2,180,019	7	423,712 11
1772			
1773			
1774			
1775			
1776			
1777			
1778			
1779			
1781	2,299,493	7¾ 8/10	489,787 16
1782			
1783	1,438,442	8¾ 42/100	529,096 16
1784			353,817 0
1785	3,014,784	5	314,040 0
1786	4,106,314	5	427,741 0

An additional duty was impoſed in the year 1751; but no ſpirits ſubject to that duty were made till the year 1752. In March, 1757, the making of ſpirits from corn was prohibited: the prohibition ended in April 1760.

Excluſive of two five-per-cents. *viz.* that of April 6, 1779, and April 6, 1781; including the two five-per-cents of 1779 and 1781.

Including three five-per-cents. the laſt of which was impoſed July 26, 1782.

Having ſtated the fluctuation in the price of grain and proviſions, from the Norman conqueſt to within the laſt fifteen years, it is unneceſſary to trouble the reader with further accounts, which he may inſpect every day, and which are probably within the memory of every one who may read this pamphlet.

What I have placed before him at one view may be found extremely uſeful as well as entertaining, eſpecially as I have introduced ſome miſcellaneous matters, which may prove inſtructive to thoſe who have neither leiſure nor opportunity to conſult the ſeveral authors I have compiled that part of my work from. An attentive peruſal will evince that *eſtabliſhing granaries for corn, controuling the markets* for other articles of ſubſiſtence, employing a greater number of boats for ſea and river fiſhery, and granting bounties for procuring ſupplies on cheaper terms, formed no immaterial part of the policy of our anceſtors, and may well deſerve imitation.

THE END.

At MURRAY *and* HIGHLEY'S *may be had,*

Price One Shilling, 8vo.

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

DANGER OF A PREMATURE PEACE.

BY

ALEXANDER ANNESLEY.

S. HAMILTON, PRINTER,

FALCON-COURT, FLEET-STREET, LONDON.